



# UNIVERSIDAD DE LA RIOJA

## TRABAJO FIN DE ESTUDIOS

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Fomento de la Competencia Comunicativa Intercultural (CCI)  
y del conocimiento del vocabulario cultural en Educación  
Secundaria en España a través de Skype

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# TRABAJO FIN DE MÁSTER

## **FOSTERING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE (ICC) AND CULTURAL VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE IN SPANISH SECONDARY SCHOOL VIA SKYPE**

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Máster Universitario en formación del Profesorado de ESO,  
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## 1. Introduction

This final dissertation summarizes all the contents acquired throughout the whole academic year of the *Master Universitario en Profesorado de Educación secundaria Obligatoria, Bachillerato, Formacion Profesional y Enseñanza de Idiomas*. It is divided in three different parts: the first one consists of a critical reflection of theoretical aspects of the subjects and it includes descriptive and personal reflections. Then, the second part continues with a complete course syllabus of 4<sup>th</sup> ESO, including a developed didactic unit. The last part is the innovative research project, whose aim is to study the intercultural role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the teaching and learning of a foreign language (FL) and its impact on the acquisition of cultural vocabulary on the part of the students.

## PART 1: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the first part of my project, I will analyze the different subjects in the Master's degree and the conclusions I have reached regarding the theoretical and practical training. All the subjects have been divided in two different modules: generic and specific. Subjects belonging to the generic module are compulsory for all students and they provide us with a broad vision of the teaching and learning processes. This part includes: *Aprendizaje y desarrollo de la personalidad, Procesos y Contextos educativos and Sociedad, familia y educación*. The second part complements the first one, and it is called specific as its subjects are taught in the specific module of English. These subjects are *Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de la lengua Extranjera, Complementos para la formación interdisciplinar and Innovacion docente e iniciacion a la investigacion*. This block is called specific as we study the different methods and techniques we should use in the teaching of a FL, the different ways of being innovative, or the introduction of ICT in our day-to-day classrooms.

### 1.2 Generic module

#### 1.2.1 *Aprendizaje y desarrollo de la personalidad*

This subject teaches us how to deal with the changes our students experiment during their process of development. Developmental psychology is

that branch of psychology that examines the different transformations adolescents can suffer during their stages of development and the impact and consequences they may have on their learning process.

It is widely known that adolescence is a period of transition which is characterized by a wide range of changes at multiple levels (physical, emotional, social and cognitive). In this subject we have reviewed different teaching and learning theories proposed by psychologists for ages. Firstly, Behaviorism (Pavlov, 1972) and his Classical conditioning. It states that the learning process is conceived as something mechanical and influenced by the external stimuli, that is to say, those stimuli that were originally neutral or unconditioned, can generate a conditioned response over time. On the other hand, Skinner (1938), known by the Operant conditioning, supports that conducts depend on their consequences. In other words, if the students perceive that their acts have a positive consequence or response on the part of the teacher, they will probably repeat the action (positive/negative reinforcement), however, if the reaction is negative (positive/negative punishment) they will not risk. During my internship I have been surprised as this practice really works at all levels, no matter the age of students and it is a really useful technique to control the class and the students' learning more easily, especially at the beginning, when we do not possess too much experience in this field.

Another aspect directly related to Behaviorist theories that the curriculum usually forgets about is the emotional intelligence. According to Goleman (1995) it is the ability to identify, assess and control one's own emotions, and the emotions of others. The reason why this aspect becomes so important in our practice is because our role as teachers is to motivate our students and achieve to awake their interest towards our subject. With subtle details such as reinforcements of their work we can boost their self-esteem and make them feel motivated to continue studying. If we understand their emotions we can help them to express themselves, control their impulses and reach a mental wellbeing, an aspect that can be crucial in their future lives.

Other scholars that we cannot leave side-lined are Piaget (1952), Vygotsky (1978) and Ausubel (1968), who are known as constructivists. According to these theorists, the changes we observe in students' behavior are the result of

those changes that have taken place in their cognitive structures. Piaget (1952) defined adolescence as the stage in which formal operations start to be developed, Ausubel (1968) considered that students' role is learning to learn, and create and finally, Vygotsky proposed that social interaction was the essential factor we use to construct knowledge. As I have had the pleasure to observe, scaffolding is one of the key techniques all teachers should use to guide students from their current level of knowledge to upper stages, as Vygotsky (1978) proposes with his Zone of Proximal development. The social interaction students maintain with their families, teachers and friends is essential for the construction of their self-esteem and self-concept. When all these factors get together we may encounter some problems such as bullying, lack of integration or depression which may lead to other problems such as drug consumption, eating disorders or even suicide. We have a huge responsibility as teachers and, to the extent possible, we have to be alert of these symptoms in order to stop and control them as soon as possible.

To sum up, I consider that the input we have received in *Aprendizaje y desarrollo de la personalidad* becomes crucial to understand the complexities teenagers may present in order to help them develop their social and personal values in general and their learning skills in particular. Future teachers need to be aware of what they are going to find in a secondary classroom and this subject gives us a broad idea. We have to be able to interpret both internal and external factors that the students may hinder.

### *1.2.2 Procesos y Contextos educativos*

This subject gives us the keys to become a competent teacher and the steps we have to follow to create a teaching programme. In order to be competent, teachers must show objectivity, sensitivity, clarity, enthusiasm and empathy. Teachers must be clear, change activities, motivate the students and be aware of the time they possess.

The second subject within the generic module is entitled *Procesos y contextos educativos*, and is linked to Pedagogy. The main aim of didactics is to understand the teaching-learning process that takes part in different contexts. This subject was crucial to understand the organization of schools and gave us an initial contact with the documents used in secondary schools, such as the



*Proyecto Educativo de Centro (PEC)*, *Programacion General Annual (PGA)*, *Proyecto curricular de centro (PCC)* the didactic units or the didactic department syllabi etc. This subject provided us with the different steps we had to follow to create a didactic unit, paying special attention to the objective we want to achieve. As teachers we have to create a more inclusive fair and democratic education and guarantee its quality for all the students in three basic dimensions: personal growth, competences and abilities. We should take care of diversity and we should carry out an inclusive education, based in collaboration and without any kind of discrimination. The first step is to view diversity as something positive, not as a barrier.

This subject introduces the basic aspects of the current Educational Legislation in Spain (*Ley Orgánica 8/2013*, 9<sup>th</sup> December) to pre-service teachers. The way schools are organized and the different levels of the curriculum are elements that will be shown later on in this paper and that we learned in this subject. From my humble view, the most effective part of this subject was the review of the different education laws such as -*Ley Orgánica de Educación (LOE)*, or *Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa (LOMCE)*. This provided us with the necessary background knowledge of the panorama of our country.

In general terms, this subject aims at training qualified teachers in most aspects of education, and making them able to understand and manage the basic aspects of education and organization as regards the main documents.

### *1.2.3 Sociedad, Familia y Educación*

The last of the generic subjects is *Sociedad, Familia y Educación*, which could be related to Sociology. We analyzed contents related to the social functions of education, social and educational inequalities, the role of families and the function of teachers and other institutions in the teaching and learning process. As Coleman (1966) points out, education does not only consist on teaching different subjects but also on instructing and teaching the students the social values and norms such as equality of gender, social class or race. Furthermore, it is important to remark that families, teachers and the school are an essential part of education and socialization of students. Each family differs from the others depending on its structure. Thus, the structure of a family is

directly related to academic success. As teachers we should compensate for the possible instability that students may suffer at home.

We were given the clues to understand the principles that ruled society, especially regarding the history of teaching, taking into account aspects such as gender, minority groups or social class.

Finally, but not less important, the issue of equality was also mentioned. Multicultural classes must be seen as enriching the classroom environment and enhancing the development of intercultural competence. Factors such as family, friends, teachers, gender or origin determine to a large extent the way students learn (Hughes, 2007).

This subject has given me the opportunity to familiarize myself with the current situation of our country in terms of its educational system and its relation with the society. I have learned to be aware of the conditions and realities that surround students and the way their backgrounds determine to some extent how our classes will develop.

These general subjects have allowed us to gain broad understanding of basic elements that we should know as future teachers and put into practice during our internship. In the following section of this theoretical framework we will focus our attention on those subjects straightly related to English.

## 2. Specific Module

### 2.1 *Aprendizaje y enseñanza de la lengua extranjera: inglés*

Once we have studied the generic module we start describing the specific module, that is to say, those subjects that were taught in English.

The subject *Aprendizaje y enseñanza de la lengua extranjera* is divided into two parts taught by different teachers and it complements the subject *Procesos y Contextos*. The first part was mainly devoted to the analysis of the Spanish Legislation for Secondary Education where we worked on the *Ley Organica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa* (LOMCE), which was a difficult but useful task given that as teachers we have to become familiarized with the terminology and structure of the laws of our educational system. Besides, we studied the different elements that formed the English curriculum and how to manage them correctly. In this first section we also developed the awareness of the importance of the Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC). As

Saville-Troike (1982: 1) states “not only rules for communication and shared rules for interaction, but also the cultural rules and knowledge are the basis for the content of communicative events and interaction processes”.

We live in a society that is constantly changing and young people are forced to be involved in multiculturalism and participate, respect and broaden their knowledge. This kind of learning can help speakers to solve or avoid cultural misunderstandings and overcome stereotyped perceptions of the TL community. We developed an intercultural activity and presented it in class. We dealt with Bryam (1997) idea of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) which is divided into five savors: savor (knowledge of cultures), savoir être (positive intercultural attitude), savoir apprendre/faire (ability to learn and process new knowledge about cultures), savoir comprendre (ability to interpret and establish relationships with your own culture), and savoir engager (ability to evaluate, critical cultural awareness)

Finally, another essential aspect of this subject was the different assessment methods: summative and formative. We had to design our own test using both types of assessment and provide a rubric. When I started my internship I found it quite difficult to test the exams, but after having into account the cornerstones of testing (usefulness, practicality, reliability, validity, authenticity, security, transparency and washback effect) it was easier to correct them.

In the second part we studied the different teaching methods used along the history and its repercussion on education. We examined diverse syllabi types- notional/functional, situational, skill-based, content-based, genre-based and task-based- and we focused our attention on Content and Language Integrated language (CLIL). We were also taught to use different ICT tools such as Kahoot, Edpuzzle, Socrative, Flipboard, skype, Inklewriter, and Pinterest. We have explored and used new forms of delivering information such as infographics or virtual platforms such as genially. We designed our own language WebQuest after being instructed in the field. As we lived in a globalized world, we need to possess a second language and through CLIL we can teach a new language to our students at the same time we teach them content. These resources are favorable both for teachers and students as it is a good way of maintaining education up-to-date.

## *2.2 Complementos para la formación Disciplinar*

The most pertinent part of this subject was the study of the different teaching methods. In order to understand these methods, we studied first the differences that exist between concepts such as approach, method and techniques (Anthony, 1963). We studied all the terminology related to education and teaching to be able to differentiate basic terms such as Foreign and Second language. We dealt with theories regarding L1 acquisition, which is directly related with the contents studied in the subject of Psychology (Behaviorism from Skinner, Innatism, and Interactionism) and the relationship that exists between theories of L1 acquisition and L2 learning -Contrastive Analysis (Lado, 1957), Error Analysis (Corder, 1972) or Morpheme Order Studies (Brown, 1994). This knowledge allowed us to analyze the different methods that have existed along history from Grammar-Translation Method in which attention was focused on the teaching of grammar and vocabulary leaving aside other skills, to other new methods or approaches such as Content and Language Integrated learning (CLIL) , Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Language Teaching or Dogme Language teaching.

An important notion that this subject has emphasized is that English is the language of travel, business, science, technology, education, and economy. In other words, it is an international language. Nevertheless, we should be aware of the fact that when we teach this language it may be influenced by individual factors (biological: gender, age; cognitive: intelligence, aptitude, learning strategies; affective: attitude, motivation, anxiety), and contextual factors such as the distance between L1 and L2, the classroom, the school or the teacher. Therefore, we have to select the method or methods we want to use in our lessons bearing in mind all this aspects mentioned if we want our students to properly acquire the second language.

## *2.3 Innovación Docente e Iniciación a la Investigación Educativa*

Finally, the subject *Innovacion Docente e Iniciacion a la investigaci3n* focuses on the different ways teachers may improve their lessons and the enjoyment of the students. This subject gives us ideas not only for our future as teachers but also for sections of this MA dissertation.

In the first part of the subject, we got familiarized with the terminology in EFL classroom such as action research, research journal, case studies or triangulation. We focused our attention on research and we investigated the different steps teachers have to follow when carrying out a research, an information that would later be useful for the completion of the final part of this piece of work. As Bell (2006) points out, selecting a topic is a difficult task for the researcher. We should start our investigation selecting the topic we want to deal with and the methods that could be used to gather information. Our assignment consisted on the practical application of the contents we had acquired. We learnt how to do an appropriate introduction and an abstract so we had to design an example of action research including all the pertinent information and materials and selecting the topic we would later develop in our innovative project. Investigation in the English classroom is crucial to set realistic goals, achieve those goals and make the teaching learning process more successful, and this subject is the perfect opportunity to do so.

Another important part of the work of a researcher is the review of the literature. When we carry out a research we have to bear in mind the information that already exists. If we do not study all the papers that have to do with the topic of your research we will probably repeat the information already discovered and consequently we would not succeed. As Bell (2006) states, when we review the literature there are two possible approaches we may follow: theory-first and theory-after research. Whereas the former consists of verifying a theory with the results of a study, the latter deals with carrying out the research and finding a theory afterwards.

Finally, in the last part of the subject we were given the keys we need for our innovative project. We differentiated between teacher and learner centered classrooms and we were taught the different steps we should follow as teachers if we wanted to turn traditional lessons into more innovative ones. At the end of the subject we had to create our own innovative tool that could be put into practice with our future students in the secondary education.

To conclude, both the specific and common subjects have allowed us to know the panorama of Spanish secondary education and have prepared us for our future teaching practice. As it is going to be explained in the next part of this dissertation, all the elements learnt in the theoretical framework will be useful

when we have to design the different didactic units, and will help us to adapt the contents to the different levels, needs and characteristics of the classroom and of our students.

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## 2. TEACHING PROGRAMME

### 2.1 Introduction

Planning a course syllabus including all the contents that are going to be studied and developed during the academic course is one of the most relevant tasks that teachers have to carry out. The design of a syllabus requires reflection upon various aspects of the teaching and learning processes that both students and teachers go through during the whole academic year. We live in a globalized world and the need of the second language is essential if we want to get in touch with other cultures. In fact, English teaching programmes must propose different activities to empower students' abilities to go further in their knowledge of the language so that they could apply all these contents to the real world. For this reason, Communicative Language teaching is the preferred approach to teach a foreign language, as it allows a comprehensive and effective development of the four skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

To develop this teaching unit we will follow the regulation "*Real Decreto 1105/2014 (26<sup>th</sup> June) por el que se establece el currículo básico de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y del Bachillerato*". Besides, when we design the syllabus we should do it bearing in mind the contextual needs and opportunities offered by the school. For this reason, the next pages of this dissertation will be devoted to the development of a syllabus adapted to a group of students from 4<sup>th</sup> ESO from *–IES Duques de Nájera*. We will start by presenting the main goals that students should achieve by the end of the course and the competences they will have to develop along the didactic units. Besides, it will be justified the different methodologies that have been followed in the development of the lesson and the attention given to those students who may present any kind of learning difficulty or cultural or familiar problems that may hinder learning. In this vein it will be also explained the assessment and learning standards, the evaluation procedures followed by the teachers and the materials and resources used in the development of the activity. The last part of this second section will consist on the design of ten didactic units (one of them developed) that will be linked to the topic I deal with in my innovative project: new technologies and Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)



## 2.2. Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students at this stage of learning will be able to:

1- Assume their duties, knowing and applying their rights in the respect to others, to practice tolerance, cooperation and solidarity, to dialogue reinforcing human rights and equality in treatment and opportunity between men and women, as common values of a plural society and to prepare to perform a democratic citizenship

2- Develop and consolidate discipline and study habits individually and cooperatively as a necessary condition for an efficient performance of the learning task and as a way of personal development.

2- Express and interact successfully and autonomously in communicative situations, inside and outside the classroom, in a comprehensible and adequate manner.

3- Read and understand various texts within their capacities and interests in order to extract general and specific information.

4- Write simple texts with diverse purposes about different topics using appropriate cohesion and coherent resources.

5- Use correctly the phonetic, lexical, structural and functional elements of the foreign language in real communicative contexts.

6- Develop their autonomous learning capacity, reflect upon their own learning process, and transfer communicative knowledge and strategies that have been acquired in other languages into the foreign language

7- Use didactic learning strategies and resources including ICT, to obtain, select and present information orally and in writing.

8- Appreciate the foreign language as an instrument to access information and as a diverse content's learning tool.

9- Value the foreign language and languages in general as communication tools that allow for the understanding among people with different backgrounds, languages and cultures, avoiding any type of discrimination

10- Display a receptive and self-confident attitude towards the learning process and the use of the foreign language.

## 2.3. Course contents

The course contents are the combination of knowledge, abilities and skills that contribute to the achievement of the course objectives and competences. As stated in “*Real Decreto 1105/2014 (26<sup>th</sup> June) por el que se establece el currículo básico de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y del Bachillerato*” and which establishes the Secondary Education Curriculum of the Autonomous Community of La Rioja (BOR nº79 12/06/2015) the minimal contents for the fourth year of ESO are divided into four blocks:

### *Block 1. Listening, comprehension and speaking*

- Understand the general and specific meaning of simple conversations about previously known topics presented in a clear and organized manner.
- Understand interpersonal communications in order to answer in a timely manner
- Obtain general and specific information from dialogues and oral texts about daily matters such as numbers, prizes, years, timetables, timelines, names, places or jobs.
- Usage of strategies for the comprehension of oral messages: verbal and nonverbal contexts, background knowledge of the situation, key word identification and identification of the attitudes and purposes of the students.
- Understand the main points and relevant details of directions, adverts, brief messages and statements articulated in a slow and clear way, as long as the acoustic conditions are good and the sound is not distorted.
- Distinguish, with image support, main ideas and relevant information in presentations about educational or interesting topics.
- Oral production of descriptions, narrations and explanations of experiences, events and diverse contexts.
- Active participation in conversations and simulations on everyday topics, as well as on those that are of personal interest to the students.

- Answer properly to the information required by the teacher and the classmates in the conversations.
- Autonomous usage of communication strategies with the purpose of initiating, keeping, and ending interactions.
- Use of the basic comprehension strategies to understand discourse.
- Development of the strategies to overcome the interruptions in communication making use of verbal and nonverbal elements to express themselves in different activities

### *Block 2. Reading and writing*

- Identification of the main topic of a written text with contextual support
- Identification of the purpose of the writer.
- Comprehension of the basic instructions to the correct development of the activities.
- General and specific understanding of diverse texts, both digital and paper-based, that are of general interest or refer to other contents in the curriculum
- Autonomous extensive reading on topic of personal interest to the students.
- Recognize written language characteristics, convention, and the differences between oral discourse and written discourse.
- Create short texts making use of connectors of sequence following a model and using basic writing strategies (planning, texting, revision).
- Use of the basic spelling and punctuation rules and recognition of its importance in the written communication
- Writing of diverse text with the appropriate lexicon according to a certain topic and context, as well as with cohesive elements that establish the relationship among ideas, and through the autonomous use of basic writing strategies (planning, writing and revision)
- Initiative to present written texts with an adequate digital or paper format.
- Personal communication with native speakers of the foreign language by mail or through the use of technology

### *Block 3. Knowledge of the language*

#### *Linguistic knowledge*

- Usage of expressions, idioms and vocabulary related to general topics, as well as to those of the students' personal interest, common lexicon and items contained in other subjects of the curriculum.
- Recognition of antonyms, synonyms, false friends and word building through the use of prefixes and suffixes.
- Consolidation and usage of structures and functions associated with different communicative situations
- Autonomous recognition and production of various rhythmic, intonation and accentuation patterns in words and sentences.

#### *Reflection on learning processes*

- Application of strategies to organize, acquire, remember and use vocabulary.
- Autonomous organization and use of learning resources such as dictionaries, reference books, libraries or digital resources
- Analysis and reflection upon the usage and meaning of various grammatical aspects through comparisons and contrasts with other known languages
- Participation in the assessment of their own learning processes and self-correction strategies.
- Organization of personal work as a strategy to progress in their learning processes.
- Interest in taking advantage of the learning opportunities offered inside and outside the classroom.
- Active participation in group work.

### *Block 4. Sociocultural aspects and intercultural awareness.*

- Evaluation of the importance of the foreign language in international relations
- Identification of the most notorious characteristics of the customs, norm, attitudes and values of the society whose language is being learnt.

- Knowledge of the most relevant traits of the culture of the countries where the foreign language is used, obtaining that information through various sources, Internet and ICT.
- Interest and initiative in communicative exchange practice with native speakers of learners of the foreign language
- Appropriate use of linguistic patterns associated with concrete communicative situations
- Understanding of the value of the relations with people from other cultures in their own personal enrichment.

## **2.4 Key competences**

The basic competences are the ones that students must have developed at the end of compulsory education in order to achieve their personal realization, practice their active citizenship, and be able to develop permanent learning throughout their lives.

According to the *Real Decreto 1105/2014 por el que se establece el currículo básico de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y del Bachillerato*, there are seven competences that need to be developed in the different subjects of the Spanish Curriculum. Each unit will focus on one or several competences. These seven competences are:

1. Competence in linguistic communication (C1)
2. Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology (C2)
3. Digital competence (C3)
4. Learning to learn (C4)
5. Interpersonal, intercultural and social and civic competence (C5)
6. Initiative and entrepreneurship (C6)
7. Cultural awareness and expression (C7)

## **2.5. Methodology**

As it has been stated along the dissertation, the perfect methodology does not exist. After a period of observation of the different lessons and teachers, I

have come to the conclusion that each teacher should search for those methods that best suit each unit, having into account the classroom context, the contents, and the available resources and materials. For this reason, we should not only use a methodology but we should take the most important and effective characteristics from each one in order to reach the fixed goals.

The methodology used in this didactic syllabus consists of a mixture of different methods and it has as its main purpose to help the students achieve a better understanding of the contents. As in the first didactic unit, it has been combined two different methods: the grammar-translation method and the communicative approach.

Through the Grammar-Translation method (Duff, 1989; Lavault, 1985; Hurtado-Albir 2001) the teacher explains in the first language the grammatical rules. The students study and memorize these rules and practice them with different exercises (translation exercises, fill the blanks, match concepts, irregular verbs charts...). Besides, they are also presented several words of vocabulary they have to retain and apply to different contexts. This method focuses its attention on two different skills: reading and writing, leaving aside the other skills: listening and speaking. The reason why the lesson is taught in Spanish is the low level of the students. Nevertheless, they are sometimes asked to speak in the second language in order to practice communication.

On the other hand, the communicative method (Harmer, 2003) compensates those skills (listening and speaking) that the Grammar-Translation method does not cover. This approach allows the students to play a more active role in the classroom. With this approach they can discuss about different issues, express their opinions, and maintain dialogues and conversations that could be useful for their day-to-day lives.

It is also important to mention the emphasis given to the information and communication technologies (ICT) and the new ways of communication via social media (Skype, Tuenti, Twitter, Whatsapp, or sms) and the manner in which the students should use the informal language if they want to communicate with their friends in an informal register. This part is directly linked to the innovation project I have carried out in the last section of this dissertation. New technologies are so present in our lives that we, as teachers, should integrate them in our ELT classrooms in order to develop some activities that

could not be carried out with traditional methods such as face-to-face exchanges with foreign students in order to practice cultural vocabulary or improve fluency in the FL.

Finally, we cannot forget about affective variables such as motivation, students' attitude and interest. Adolescence is a period in which the emotions and feelings change and these are essential aspects that teachers should take into account. If we want to develop the syllabus successfully and obtain a quiet and positive atmosphere it is important to avoid problems such as bullying among others.

Once objectives, competences and the methodology used in the classroom have been explained, we should focus our attention on attention to diversity, that is to say, how those students who present some learning difficulty, or the social problems they present can be overcome so that they do not influence their academic performance.

## **2.6 Attention to diversity**

According to the order 6/2014 de 6<sup>th</sup> June, *BOR nº73, de 13 de junio de 2014*, a Plan of Attention to Diversity must be understood as a set of general actions and measures that an educational institution puts in practice to serve all the students, and particularly to those who require an educational attention different from the ordinary one and adjusted response to their characteristics and necessities, facilitating them the maximum development according to their personal abilities in order to fulfill the basic objectives and capacities established in general for all the students.

The group of 4<sup>th</sup> of ESO is quite heterogeneous, so all the students deserve being paid attention in order to cover their needs and problems. Nevertheless, when we have grade repeaters, students from other cultures, absent students or students suffering from ADHD we must pay them a different type of attention. For this reason, the school programme pays attention to the inclusion of these students to increase their self-esteem, their competences, their motivation and their learning strategies.

Sometimes, the effort that pupils make to learn the new language changes depending on their interests and needs. This is the reason why the creation of a

didactic unit is one of the most important tasks a teacher should develop. The topics that the teachers choose to deal with in the classroom can motivate or demotivate the students depending on several factors such as their age or level. One of the best ways to achieve the aims is through the positive reinforcement or the proper distribution of the classroom. If we place those students who suffer from attention deficit at the first rows they will probably pay more attention and follow the lesson with ease. Besides, if we pay attention to their evolution rather than to their mistakes we will make them feel motivated enough to keep on studying.

Finally, the contents will also be explained bearing in mind the skills and capacities of the students, for this reason, some difficult aspects will be explained in both languages in order to make sure they have understood everything. The contents consist of a revision and repetition of all the aspects they should know. This strategy gives those students with learning difficulties the opportunity to retain the knowledge. On the other hand, those students whose level is higher will also be provided with extra materials. In this group of 4<sup>th</sup> ESO there were different students belonging to different cultures so normalization has to be present in every moment. What is more, these students are given a more active role and they can share with their classmates their traditions, customs, habits, festivities, etc. There were also some students with ADHA located in the first rows in order to control their deficit attention and an Asperger but he did not present noticeable problems during the lessons.

After solving the problems that may arise during the development of the didactic unit, teachers should take decisions upon the way in which they are going to assess the students, the learning standards they are going to follow, the evaluation procedure (formative or summative assessment) the students will receive and the materials and resources that are going to be used along the course. All these aspects will be analyzed in the forthcoming section.

## **2.7. Assessment criteria**

According to *Decreto 1105/2014, 26<sup>th</sup> June, por el que se establece el currículo básico de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y del Bachillerato*, the assesment criteria that have been selected for the first year of Secondary Education are:



- To understand the main idea and identify important details in oral and written messages.
- To be able to express themselves fluently and maintain an appropriate pronunciation and intonation in conversations and dialogues.
- To apply to the production of oral and written texts the socio-cultural and socio-linguistic knowledge acquired
- To understand autonomously the general idea of a written text and extract the specific information from different narrations, instructions or messages adapted to their level.
- To write brief texts using the proper structures, functions and vocabulary and respect the spelling and punctuation rules.
- To utilize the acquired knowledge on the linguistic elements of the foreign language in different communicative contexts in order to self-correct and self-evaluate oral and written productions.
- To identify, use, and explain the learning strategies that have been used, propose alternative ones, and decide on those that are more appropriate for the learning objectives.
- To use in a guided way the ICT to look for information, use models to produce texts, send and receive emails, etc.
- To identify and describe key cultural traits of the countries where the foreign language is spoken, as well as establish relationships among customs, uses, attitudes, etc.

## **2.8. Learning standards**

### *Listening comprehension:*

- Understand the essential and specific information of messages that contain instructions, indications, etc.
- Understand the general sense and main points of a conversation (formal or informal) in different contexts such as in a bank, a shop, a restaurant, a hotel, etc.
- Identify essential information of a conversation between different people talking about daily life issues, or of a TV programs that are expressed clearly and slowly.

- Understand in a dialogue in which takes part the different explanations, points of view and opinions about music, cinema, or topical issues
- Discriminate usual sound patterns, accents and rhythms and the communicative intention related with them.

*Spoken Production:*

- Create well-structured oral presentations previously prepared (PPT) about daily life aspects, organizing the ideas in a coherent way, explaining briefly the main ideas and answering to the questions that the hearers may ask.
- Show fluency in unusual situations that may appear in a trip and know how to ask for information, help, explanation, etc
- Participate in informal face to face or virtual conversations about usual or unusual issues, exchange information and justify briefly opinions and points of view.
- Take part in formal conversations (meetings, interviews, etc) giving or asking information and solutions about certain problems and sharing their opinions in a clear and coherent way.

*Reading comprehension:*

- Identify relevant information in detailed instructions about the use of gadgets, devices or computer programmes.
- Understand the general sense of adverts dealing with their personal or academic interest (grants, job offer, etc)
- Understand the information shared in online blogs (travel experiences, impressions, feelings, imaginary and real facts) and exchange information about concrete and abstract issues
- Analyze letters, e-mails or faxes and know how to react to this situations
- Identify specific information such as news, informative and argumentative articles.

*Written production:*

- Complete a detailed questionnaire with personal, academic or working information
- Write a CV following the Europass model
- Take notes and messages in a relevant and clear way about daily issues
- Take part in forums, blogs, chats in which they describe experiences, expressions and feelings about their daily activities.

## 2.9 Evaluation procedure

This syllabus is designed with the aim of providing students with both, formative and summative assessment throughout the academic year. On the one hand, formative assessment is based on the follow-up of their behavior, their positive attitude, and their active participation not only in the speaking activities but also in the correction of the homework. Students should perform their tasks weekly (10%). Furthermore, students should bring to class their English notebooks properly organized with all the activities developed both in the classroom and at home. These notebooks allow the teacher a systematic follow-up of each student and allow the students to carry out an autonomous work. In this way, it is easier for the teacher to know if the students have achieved the goals fixed. This information lets us know the aspects they have to improve, and provide them with feedback to solve the different problems that may appear. Besides, it will also be taken into account the participation with the language assistant and in the different dialogues, and debates which were carried out in the classroom. Besides, one of the competences students should develop is the learning to learn competence. Students should self-evaluate their work by completing a rubric (see appendix 1).

On the other hand, for summative assessment, students receive a grade per term based on their performance on reading, listening, writing and speaking tasks. At the end of each unit the language assistant examines their fluency and expression in the second language. In the last unit of each term, they will take an exam that will include the three units studied. Finally, in a more detailed way, the following percentages explain the summative and formative assessment:

SKILL	PUNCTUATION
LISTENING	10%
READING	10%
WRITING	15%
GRAMMAR	40%
SPEAKING	15%

PARTICIPATION/BEHAVIOR/MATERIAL/WB	10%
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It consists of a continuous evaluation. If the student fails the first or the second term they have an opportunity to pass the next exam. In the case of failing the third term they can pass the extraordinary exam in September. Materials and homework is also important. Each time they do not bring their materials, books or homework they will be penalized with a negative mark. Each three negative marks, 0'25 points are subtracted from their final exam. They can also increase their marks until 0'5 participating with the language assistant.

## 2.10 Materials and resources

This didactic syllabus is based on the book *Real English 4* students' book and workbook (Marks& Addison, 2010). The main advantage of this kind of books is the interactive material they offer. Activities can be checked in the projector and it allows the students to follow the lesson in a different way to the traditional one. This new approach increases students' motivation and interest toward the subject

Furthermore, the most interesting resources used in the development of this unit have been Powerpoint and prezi that allows the teacher to present information (vocabulary and grammar) in an innovative way. Finally, students can save their own dictionaries in a drawer and consult them autonomously if they have some doubt about the vocabulary. For the practice of the listening different materials such as Youtube or TED videos have been implemented in order to present authentic materials to the students. Furthermore, ICT has also been present in the development of this didactic unit. Different tools such as Kahoot (units 5 and 9), Inklewriter (units 1, 2, 4, 6 and 7), or Socrative (unit 9), have been used for the enjoyment of the lessons and to raise students' motivation.

## 2.11 Syllabus

In this part we will provide a brief summary of the 9 units included in the

textbook. The first term goes from the 6<sup>th</sup> September to 22<sup>th</sup> December. During this term students will deal with the first four units. Each unit contains session so that students can have enough time to retain all the contents studied. The second terms goes from 11<sup>th</sup> January until 24<sup>th</sup> March and units five, seven and eight will be developed. Finally, the third term goes from 4<sup>th</sup> April to 23<sup>th</sup> June. I have decided to leave only two units for this term (unit 9- developed unit) and unit 10 (extra unit), as students will have to put into practice my innovative project and several problems may arise during its implementation, it is important to have time enough in order to overcome any kind of hurdle.

1st TERM	UNIT 1- INTRODUCTION	5 SESSIONS
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>CONTENT</b>	
Understand the differences between the p. simple and continuous, past simple and continuous and will and be going to Use the quantifiers and determiners Exchange personal information Learn vocabulary about geography, clothes, accessories and food Read popular recipes of English speaking countries Listen to a conversation between two interlocutors	<b>BLOCK 1: Listening, comprehension and speaking</b> Listening to an interview to a new student at the school. Exchange personal information using classroom language <b>BLOCK 2: Reading and writing</b> Create their own recipes and publish them on the website of the school. Read a national geographic magazine dealing with geocaching. <b>BLOCK 3: Knowledge of the language</b> Revision of vocabulary about: geography, clothes and accessories, food and adjectives. Present simple VS present continuous Past simple VS past continuous Will and going to Quantifiers and determiners <b>BLOCK 4: Socio cultural aspects and intercultural awareness</b> Know the gastronomy, geography and typical clothes around the globe	
<b>COMPETENCES</b>		
C1 /C3/C4/C5/C6		
<b>MATERIALS</b>		
Projector, internet, Textbook, Workbook, blackboard, notebook, inkewriter,		
<b>ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	
Formative assessment	Grammar-Translation Communicative Language Teaching	

1st TERM	UNIT 2- MOVING ON	SESSIONS: 7
OBJECTIVES	CONTENT	
<p>Understand the Present perfect simple and used to. Review the past simple.</p> <p>Understand the vocabulary related to traveling</p> <p>Listen to recordings related to traveling</p> <p>Read texts related to travelling (families that leave their houses and travel the full time, fast means of transport and train routes)</p> <p>Adequately pronounce the words "should" and "route"</p> <p>Express traveling plans and give directions.</p>	<p><b>BLOCK 1: Listening, comprehension and speaking</b></p> <p>Listen to a conversation about travel options and travel plans</p> <p>Talking about experiences (role-playing)</p> <p>Making travel arrangements (project: prepare your travel to NYC)</p> <p>Role playing talking about travelling and asking for directions (on the underground, to get to a concert)</p> <p><b>BLOCK 2: Reading and writing</b></p> <p>Read webpages and newspaper articles (families that travel full time)</p> <p>Reading about coach surf and fast transports (AVE)</p> <p>Reading about trains with special routes in Europe</p> <p>Write a diary entry about a real or imaginary event using inklewriter and publish it.</p> <p><b>BLOCK 3: Knowledge of the language</b></p> <p>Learn vocabulary related to travel and travel arrangement</p> <p>False friends: success, large, actually.</p> <p>Practice the present perfect simple, the past simple and used to.</p> <p>Identification of the sounds /ʊ/ y /ü/.</p> <p><b>BLOCK 4: Socio cultural aspects and intercultural awareness</b></p> <p>Investigation of a place of the world for the design of a travel plan</p> <p>Routes of trains in Europe</p> <p>Analyze the map of the London Underground</p> <p>Tourism to paradisiac places</p>	
COMPETENCES	<b>BLOCK 3: Knowledge of the language</b>	
C1/C3/C5/C6	<p>Learn vocabulary related to travel and travel arrangement</p> <p>False friends: success, large, actually.</p> <p>Practice the present perfect simple, the past simple and used to.</p> <p>Identification of the sounds /ʊ/ y /ü/.</p>	
MATERIALS	<b>BLOCK 4: Socio cultural aspects and intercultural awareness</b>	
<p>Projector, internet, Textbook, Workbook, blackboard, notebook, inklewriter,</p>	<p>Investigation of a place of the world for the design of a travel plan</p> <p>Routes of trains in Europe</p> <p>Analyze the map of the London Underground</p> <p>Tourism to paradisiac places</p>	
ASSESSMENT	METHODOLOGY	
Formative assessment	<p>Grammar-Translation</p> <p>Communicative Language Teaching</p>	

1st TERM	UNIT 3- IT'S A DISASTER	SESSIONS: 6
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>CONTENT</b>	
Understand and use relative pronouns (which, who, that, where, when and whose) Understand and adequately use "some", "any", and "no". Use vocabulary related to natural disasters and emergency services Use connectors of sequence Comprehensibly listen to a radio debate and conversations on volunteering Read general texts on natural disasters Write a report on a natural disaster Pronounce the sound /h/ adequately	<b>BLOCK 1: Listening, comprehension and speaking</b> Listen to a radio programme Listen to a conversation between two friends on volunteering Listening of an emergency call. Role play simulating emergency calls <b>BLOCK 2: Reading and writing</b> Readings on natural disasters (volcanic eruption, earthquakes, etc) Read a book review on the author's experiences related to traveling to disaster areas Writing a short report on a recent natural disaster <b>BLOCK 3: Knowledge of the language</b> Relative pronouns (who, which, that, where, when and whose) Some, any and no Vocabulary related to natural disasters and emergency services Connectors of sequence (first, then, etc) Phonetics: pronunciation of /h/ <b>BLOCK 4: Socio cultural aspects and intercultural awareness</b> Information retrieval on recent natural disasters and reflection upon them. Global warming.	
<b>COMPETENCES</b>		
C1 /C3/C4/C5/		
<b>MATERIALS</b>		
Projector, internet, Textbook, Workbook, blackboard, notebook, inkewriter,		
<b>ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	
Formative assessment	Grammar-Translation Communicative Language Teaching	

1st TERM	UNIT 4- AGAINST THE LAW	SESSIONS: 6
OBJECTIVES	CONTENT	
<p>Use vocabulary related to crime and TV</p> <p>Understand and use the Past Perfect Simple</p> <p>Form nouns with the suffixes –ian, -tion, -ity, -ment</p> <p>Comprehensibly read crime-related texts (modern pirates and villains who became heroes) and a television guide</p> <p>Comprehensible listen to a dialogue and a telephone survey</p> <p>Adequate pronounce the sound /s/</p> <p>Express their opinions and carry out a survey</p> <p>Write a review of a TV programme using connectors of contrast and conjunctions.</p>	<p><b>BLOCK 1: Listening, comprehension and speaking</b></p> <p>Listen to a dialogue about crime prevention and a telephone survey.</p> <p>Express opinions about CCTV</p> <p>Do a real survey</p> <p>Express their opinions about the things they like or the things they don't like.</p> <p><b>BLOCK 2: Reading and writing</b></p> <p>Reading of online TV guide and a magazine article</p> <p>Reading of a text about Bonnie and Cycle.</p> <p>Reading of an article about modern pirates</p> <p>Reading of a text about a German Bank manager who stole money to give it to the poor.</p> <p>Reading of a text about three villains that became heroes: Alex Conran, Jessica- Jane Clement and Paul Wilson.</p> <p>Reading of a text on popular heroes (Pancho Villa, Ned Kelly, Grace O'malley)</p> <p>Write a review of their favorite film. The best film will be projected at the end of the course.</p> <p><b>BLOCK 3: Knowledge of the language</b></p> <p>Learn vocabulary related to crime and television.</p> <p>Noun suffixes</p> <p>Use past perfect simple</p> <p>False Friends: base, embarrassed, terrific, rope</p> <p>Pronunciation of /s/</p> <p><b>BLOCK 4: Socio cultural aspects and intercultural awareness</b></p> <p>Information on justice systems around the world</p> <p>Knowledge about TV guides.</p> <p>Information about popular heroes (Pancho Villa, Ned Kelly, Grace O'Malley)</p>	
COMPETENCES	<p>C1 /C2/C3/C4/C5/C6</p>	
MATERIALS		
<p>Projector, internet, Textbook, Workbook, blackboard, notebook, inklewriter,</p>		
ASSESSMENT	METHODOLOGY	
<p>Formative and summative assessment</p>	<p>Grammar-Translation</p> <p>Communicative Language Teaching</p>	



2nd TERM	UNIT 5- FACT OR FICTION?	SESSIONS: 7
OBJECTIVES		CONTENTS
Learn vocabulary related to inventions and verbs Use correctly the First, Second and Third conditionals. Comprehensible reading of three invents to take part in a poll, a feature article on the time traveler, and three texts about technological mysteries (The Ancient pyramids, the nasca lines and Stonehenge) Understand and adequately use expressions for making suggestions as well as expressions of agreement and disagreement. Understand and adequately use the connectors of addition. Comprehensibly listen to a conversation about invents and plans to carry out a project. Write an essay about an important invent using connectors of addition Use the adequate syllable intonation in words		<p><b>BLOCK 1: Listening, comprehension and speaking</b>  Make suggestions and reach an agreement  Kahoot Quiz: inventions along history.  Express their opinions about things that should be invented.  Listen to and understand discussions  Listen to two teenagers taking about their class time capsule  Decide on five elements they would include in the time capsule and why.</p> <p><b>BLOCK 2: Reading and writing</b>  Read a reader's poll and a feature article  Reading on time travelling  Reading about three old monuments that may have been built with modern technology.  Role play: Imagine they are friends of Einstein. Write in groups an opinion essay about an important invention using connectors of addition.</p> <p><b>BLOCK 3: Knowledge of the language</b>  Learn vocabulary related to inventions and verbs  Practice using the First, Second and Third Conditional.  Connectors of addition  Identify the stressed syllable of different words and intonate properly.  False friends: professor  Real life: Give instructions</p> <p><b>BLOCK 4: Socio cultural aspects and intercultural awareness</b>  Knowledge about quotes of famous people predicting about the future (Einstein, Lord Kelvin, Ken Olsen, King William)  Knowledge about famous places around the world (Ancient pyramids, the Nasca lines, Stonehenge) and its mysteries  Knowledge about famous inventors (Alexander Fleming, Benjamin Franklin, etc)</p>
COMPETENCES		
C1 /C2/C3/C4/C5/C6		
MATERIALS		
Projector, internet, Textbook, Workbook, blackboard, notebook, inkewriter,		
ASSESSMENT		METHODOLOGY
Formative assessment		Grammar-Translation Communicative Language Teaching

2nd TERM		UNIT 6- SMART ART	SESSIONS: 5
OBJECTIVES		CONTENT	
Learn vocabulary related to art and adjectives. Understand and correctly use the passive voice in the Present Simple, Past simple and Future Form adjectives with the suffixes –al, -ed and –ful and order them correctly in the different sentences Use comparisons and expressions of contrast Comprehensibly read about different articles dealing with art Listen to and understand an art lecture and a museum tour Express preferences and compare and contrast (use comparisons and expressions of contrast) Write a description of work of an art Adequately pronounce short and long vowels in different words Identify and produce the sounds /i:/ and /aɪ/.		<b>BLOCK 1: Listening, comprehension and speaking</b> Listen to a lecture about modern art. Listen to a museum tour of an exhibition by the artist Yayoi Kusama. Talk about talented people, the things they are good at and if they consider themselves talented at something. Compare and contrast works of art. Role-playing: conversation between a visitor and a worker at the art gallery. <b>BLOCK 2: Reading and writing</b> Reading a text on the biography of Stephen Wiltshire, “the Human Camera” Reading of “the sleeping artist” a man who painted his house’s walls while sleeping Reading a review of strange materials used to create works of art Reading of unusual museums Writing a description of a work of art. <b>BLOCK 3: Knowledge of the language</b> Learn vocabulary related to art and adjectives. Suffixes –al, -ed and –ful Present Simple Passive, Past Simple Passive and Future Simple Passive) Comparison and contrast Adjective order Sounds /i:/ and /aɪ/. <b>BLOCK 4: Socio cultural aspects and intercultural awareness</b> Cultural art expressions around the world. Learn about different artist and art works (Dali, The Mona Lisa, The Alhambra, The Sagrada Familia, The Actor, etc) Real life: identify the symbols and the meanings of an art gallery	
COMPETENCES			
C1 /C2/C3/C4/C5/C6			
MATERIALS			
Projector, internet, Textbook, Workbook, blackboard, notebook, inkwriter,			
ASSESSMENT		METHODOLOGY	
Formative assessment		Grammar-Translation Communicative Language Teaching	

2nd TERM	UNIT 7- COOL CREATURES	SESSIONS: 7
OBJECTIVES	CONTENT	
<p>Learn vocabulary related to homeless animals, adjectives and reporting verbs</p> <p>Understand and use the Direct and the Reported Speech and the different time expressions</p> <p>Understand and use the idioms of the unit</p> <p>Use conjunctions of cause and effect</p> <p>Read different texts related to endangered and homeless animals, volunteering and two news articles</p> <p>Comprehensibly listen to several recordings about animals (homeless cats) and volunteering</p> <p>Write a report about an event about volunteering with animals</p> <p>Correctly pronounce the sound /ŋ/</p>	<p><b>BLOCK 1: Listening, comprehension and speaking</b></p> <p>Listen to a conversation about homeless cats</p> <p>Express their opinions about feeding homeless animals and putting them in shelters</p> <p>Comment on two pictures about homeless animals and listen to the events.</p> <p>Comment on different organizations that help animals (WWF)</p> <p>Interview the partner about a news report.</p> <p><b>BLOCK 2: Reading and writing</b></p> <p>Reading of a newsletter on people who help animals</p> <p>Reading of two news articles about animals (pythons in Miami and Giant Pandas)</p> <p>Reading of a text on a useful fish (used for medical treatments)</p> <p>Reading of a text on endangered animals (Asian elephant, sea turtle, Bengal tiger)</p> <p>Writing a news report about an event</p> <p><b>BLOCK 3: Knowledge of the language</b></p> <p>Adjectives and reporting verbs</p> <p>Idioms</p> <p>Reported Speech and time expressions.</p> <p>Conjunctions of cause and effect</p> <p>False friends: exciting, advertisement</p> <p>Pronunciation of the sound /ŋ/</p> <p><b>BLOCK 4: Socio cultural aspects and intercultural awareness</b></p> <p>Endangered species and organizations that protect animals around the world.</p> <p>Read different newspaper excerpts around the world</p>	
COMPETENCES	Writing a news report about an event	
C1 /C2/C3/C4/C5/C6	<p><b>BLOCK 3: Knowledge of the language</b></p> <p>Adjectives and reporting verbs</p> <p>Idioms</p>	
MATERIALS	<p>Reported Speech and time expressions.</p> <p>Conjunctions of cause and effect</p> <p>False friends: exciting, advertisement</p> <p>Pronunciation of the sound /ŋ/</p> <p><b>BLOCK 4: Socio cultural aspects and intercultural awareness</b></p> <p>Endangered species and organizations that protect animals around the world.</p> <p>Read different newspaper excerpts around the world</p>	
<p>Projector, internet, Textbook, Workbook, blackboard, notebook, inkewriter,</p>		
ASSESSMENT	METHODOLOGY	
Formative assessment	<p>Grammar-Translation</p> <p>Communicative Language Teaching</p>	

2nd TERM	UNIT 8- HEALTHY MATTERS	SESSIONS: 5
OBJECTIVES		CONTENT
<p>Understand and correctly use modal verbs (can, could, can't, must, musn't, should, shouldn't, have to, don't have to, may and might)</p> <p>Learn vocabulary related to health and keeping fit</p> <p>Read a health web forum and article about a pill that substitutes exercise and texts about home remedies</p> <p>Listen to a radio programme about allergies and a conversation about how to keep fit</p> <p>Give personal opinions on health and health care systems.</p> <p>Analyze the differences and similitudes between Spanish and American health care systems.</p> <p>Express agreement and disagreement</p> <p>Write about a new medial discovery paying attention to the use of demonstrative and possessive pronouns</p> <p>Use the internet to look for information about</p> <p>Identify the sounds /dʒ/ and /g/.</p>		<p><b>BLOCK 1: Listening, comprehension and speaking</b></p> <p>Listen to a radio programme and a conversation about exercise.</p> <p>Listen to a TED.ed programme about health care.</p> <p>Express opinions and report the news.</p> <p><b>BLOCK 2: Reading and writing</b></p> <p>Read a web forum and a scientific article</p> <p>Reading of three articles about home remedies (for colds, for healthy teeth and for treating stress)</p> <p>Write an informative essay</p> <p>Read different quotes from famous people (Buddha, Gandhi, Twain) about health and create their own quotes.</p> <p><b>BLOCK 3: Knowledge of the language</b></p> <p>Vocabulary about health and keeping fit.</p> <p>World builder: collocations</p> <p>Practice and use the modal verbs</p> <p><b>BLOCK 4: Socio cultural aspects and intercultural awareness</b></p>
COMPETENCES		
C1 /C2/C3/C4/C5/C6		
MATERIALS		
Projector, internet, Textbook, Workbook, blackboard, notebook, inklewriter,		
ASSESSMENT		METHODOLOGY
Formative assessment		Grammar-Translation Communicative Language Teaching

## **2.12 Developed unit**

TITLE: Unit 9 GETTING TOGETHER

### **6.1 Introduction**

The design of a syllabus requires reflection upon various aspects of the teaching and learning processes that both students and teachers go through during the whole academic year. We live in a globalized world and the need of the second language is essential if we want to get in touch with other cultures. In fact, English teaching programmes must propose different activities to empower students' abilities to go further in their knowledge of the language so that they could apply all these contents to the real world. For this reason, Communicative Language teaching is the preferred approach to teach a foreign language, as it allows a comprehensive and effective development of the four skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

To develop this teaching unit we will follow "*Real Decreto 1105/2014 (26<sup>th</sup> June) por el que se establece el currículo básico de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y del Bachillerato*". Besides, when we design the syllabus we should do it bearing in mind the contextual needs and opportunities offered by the school. For this reason, the next pages of this dissertation will be devoted to the development of a syllabus adapted to a group of students from 4<sup>th</sup> ESO from the IES Duques de Nájera.

The textbook that was used to cover all the contents was *Real English 4* (Marks & Addison 2010). Both the Students' book and the workbook. This textbook allows the students to reinforce the four skills in the second language and it relates at the same time its contents with the different contents from the curriculum. Apart from the book, different materials have been created and searched (videos, films, webs) to reinforce some aspects

### **6.2. Objectives**

In this teaching Unit in particular the specific objectives are going to be the following:

1. Learn social expressions and vocabulary related to invitations

2. Practice using gerunds and infinitives
3. Read a magazine article and a book excerpt
4. Listen to and understand conversations
5. Talk about differences and make plans
6. Write an informal email
7. Read comprehensively and autonomously a magazine article about the difficulty of protecting private information due to the existence of social networks.
8. Listen to a conversation between two teenagers talking about their plans for the following year and a telephonic conversation to make plans such as going to the cinema.
9. Understand the use of the informal language and the false friends
10. Understand, recognize and respect the differences between cultures of the world
11. Make plans and give opinions.
12. Identify and produce different sounds such as /ʌ/, /æ/ y /ü/.

### 6.3. Competences

The basic competences are the ones that students must have developed at the end of compulsory education in order to achieve their personal realization, practice their active citizenship, and be able to develop permanent learning throughout their lives.

According to *Real Decreto 1105/2014 por el que se establece el currículo básico de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y del Bachillerato*, there are seven competences that need to be developed in the different subjects of the Spanish Curriculum. Each unit will focus on one or several competences. These seven competences are:

- *Competence in linguistic communication*: the learning of a foreign language contributes to the acquisition of this competence in a direct way, complementing, enhancing, and filling with new comprehensive nuances this general communicative competence. This competence consists on the use of language as a tool to practice oral and written communication. It will be developed with the use of lexicon related to the new technologies and social

networks and the verbs in the infinitive and the gerund forms to make plans and take decisions. Besides, the reading comprehension will be worked through texts about virtual communication, the different social networks that exist such as Skype and the use teenagers make of the Internet. Students will also watch different videos about cultural aspects, advantages and disadvantages of using the Internet and the evolution of communication throughout history. Furthermore, the book also includes listening activities such as conversations between teenagers in which they make plans to go to the cinema or to go on holiday. Regarding the written skills, they have to create an informal e-mail in order to know the different language registers that exist.

Participation will be carried out maintaining short conversations and dialogues, answering to different questions about the possibility of becoming an exchange student and about the plans in the future. In the pronunciation different vocalic sounds present in the words “love”, “that” y “do”, that is to say, /ʌ/, /æ/ y /ü/ will be included.

- *Digital competence*: by arranging abilities to search, obtain, process and communicate information and transform it into knowledge.

- *Interpersonal, intercultural and social and civic competence*: this competence makes it possible to understand the social reality in which we live, cooperate, live together and make use of the democratic citizenship in a plural society. This competence includes various skills and knowledge that allows the students to participate, take decisions, decide how to behave in the different situations and take full responsibility for their choices. Besides, the title of the unit is “Getting together”. This competence will be carried out showing the students the importance of keeping calm when they are in trouble. Furthermore, it is also important for them to keep trying their tasks as best as possible and not give up. Each student should respect their classmates and follow the rules of the classroom. These aspects will promote the positive relationships between them and as a consequence the perfect learning environment.

In the development of some of the activities, students will have to show respect towards several cultural aspects such as the activities people like doing in their free time, and the way they should behave in a museum. Furthermore, they will also have the opportunity to appreciate their lifestyle, and take part in different activities with the possibility of becoming an exchange student.

- *Learning to learn (C4)*: this competence implies having several skills to learn to learn and be able to continue learning in a more effective and autonomous way according to their own needs and goals. It allows them to reflect on the vocabulary studied through the development of an individual dictionary in their notebooks; to understand the importance of being polite with the teacher and their classmates and to use strategies, resources and study techniques to be aware of their own knowledge and learning. Several sections of the textbook and the workbook are devoted to these activities (Check your progress, Task, Putting it together and Self-Evaluation)

- *Entrepreneurship (C5)*: finally, this competence refers to the autonomous work the students have to carry out both in the classroom and in their houses. They will have to show their creativity in the written and oral tasks, develop their organizational capacity and promote the collaborative work.

- *Cultural expression (C6)*: this competence consists on knowing, understanding, and appreciating different cultural and artistic manifestations, and using them as a source of personal enrichment. This is the one most developed along this unit in all the skills. Students are going to appreciate the different lifestyles of different countries and civilizations such as the Hopi Indian in North America or the Egyptian civilization. Besides, students should also know the different registers that exist both in oral and written communication and use them adequately depending on the context. Besides, they will also know the different ways of waving and the expressions used for each moment (birthday, Christmas, wedding, when someone has a difficult exam, etc.

## 6.4. Contents

*As stated in “Real Decreto 1105/2014 (26<sup>th</sup> June) por el que se establece el currículo básico de la Educación secundaria Obligatoria y del Bachillerato and which establishes the Secondary Education Curriculum of the Autonomous Community of La Rioja (BOR nº79 12/06/2015) the minimal contents for the fourth year of ESO are divided into four blocks:*

### *Block 1. Listening, comprehension and speaking*

- Listen and comprehension of conversation between teenagers who speak about their future plans.



- Understand the general and specific meaning of a dialogue in which a person talks about his experience as an exchange student in a different country.
- Obtain general and specific information from dialogues and oral texts about daily matters such as numbers, prizes, years, timetables, timelines, names, places or jobs.
- Usage of strategies for the comprehension of oral messages: verbal and nonverbal contexts, background knowledge of the situation, key word identification and identification of the attitudes and purposes of the students.
- Understand the main points and relevant details of directions, adverts, brief messages and statements articulated in a slow and clear way, as long as the acoustic conditions are good and the sound is not distorted.
- Distinguish, with image support, main ideas and relevant information in presentations about educational or interesting topics.
- Produce descriptions, narrations and explanations of experiences, events and diverse contexts such as the house and its rooms.
- Participate in conversations and simulations on everyday topics, as well as on those that are of personal interest to the students such as their future profession or their plans for the weekend
- Answer properly to the information required by the teacher and the classmates in the conversations.
- Discuss about the ways in which each person prefers to communicate (face to face, via social networks, etc)
- Speak making use of the vocabulary related to the ICT and the social networks
- Use of the basic comprehension strategies to understand discourse.
- Development of the strategies to overcome the interruptions in communication making use of verbal and nonverbal elements to express themselves in different activities.

### *Block 2. Reading and writing*

- Comprehend the basic instructions to the correct development of the activities.
- Comprehend an article about the privacy in the Internet and identify the intention of the writer with the message.

- Understand specific and general information from different texts in paper and digital format, authentic and adapted, dealing with ICT, social networks, or the advantages and disadvantages of educating teenagers through the use of games.
- Usage of basic strategies of reading comprehension: identification of the topic of a text with the aid of textual and non-textual elements, the use of the previous knowledge, the inference of the meaning through the context, or through the comparison of words or sentences in the languages they know.
- Recognize written language characteristics, convention, and the differences between oral discourse and written discourse.
- Create short texts making use of connectors of sequence following a model and using basic writing strategies (planning, texting, revision).
- Use of the basic spelling and punctuation rules and recognition of its importance in the written communication
- Initiative to present written texts with an adequate digital or paper format.
- Analyze the structure of an informal e-mail and writing of this email taking the example as a model.
- Understand three texts dealing with the cultural differences between countries.
- Proper use of the spelling and punctuation rules.

### *Block 3. Knowledge of the language*

In this part, students will have to identify the basic morphological elements: noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, etc. Besides, they will have to use common expressions and vocabulary related to the new technologies and new ways of communication, synonyms and antonyms, false friends such as “discussing”, “sympathetic” or “strangers”, expressions and the situations in which they are used as “bless you”, “congratulations” or “You’re welcome”, or the phrasal verbs with stay: “stay in”, “stay up”, “stay on”, etc. . They should also develop basic functions and structures related to everyday situations such as an exchange in which they can take part, the plan of a holiday or an activity such as going to the cinema using different expressions such as “that’s a great idea”, “How about...?”, “I feel like...”, or “let’s go...”. Besides, it is also vital for them to develop their ability to express themselves using the infinitive and gerund of the

different verbs. They will have to create an informal email to a friend having into account the register, the organization and paragraphing, the everyday expressions and contractions and the informal punctuation. Finally, it will also be important the recognition and production of basic rhythm patterns, intonation and stress of the sounds of the words love, “that” and “do”, that is to say, /ʌ/, /æ/ y /ü/

Once the students have acquired all these linguistic aspects they will have to apply the basic strategies to organize, acquire, remember and use the vocabulary. They will also have to make an adequate use of the different learning resources such as dictionaries, textbooks, libraries or information and communication technologies (ICT). Besides, it is also important to reflect upon the use and the meaning of the infinitive and gerund and the different registers (formal and informal) in order to use them. In this vein, students should develop auto-evaluation and auto-correction strategies, and accept the mistakes with a positive attitude and as part of the learning process.


Finally, students must show interest towards the learning opportunities created in the classroom context and they have to participate in an active way in the different activities and group works showing confidence and initiative at the same time.

#### *Block 4. Sociocultural aspects and intercultural awareness.*


- Appreciation of the foreign language as a means to communicate in the classroom and with people from other countries.
- Identification and respect towards features and everyday habits from other foreign language countries.
- Use of appropriate polite expressions and adequate register in social exchanges according to the context, the channel, the source, etc.
- Knowledge about different cultural events, historical, geographical or literary features from the foreign language countries, obtaining information through different means such as the Internet, or other information and communication technologies.
- Interest and initiative to establish communicative exchanges with foreign language speakers using both digital and paper supports.

- Appreciation of the personal enrichment caused by the relationship with people from other cultures.
- Get information about ways of maintaining cultural exchanges
- Get to know the custom from other countries and different aspects such as non-verbal communication, punctuality or dinning customs.


### UNIT 9 GETTING TOGETHER – FIRST SESSION

Activities	Skills	Goals	Comp.	Resources		Interaction
<p>-Tell the students to look at the title of the unit-Getting together- and ask them what they think they will read about the unit (social networks, new technologies). -Analysis of the front page: Ask them if they use any of the types of communication in the pictures and mention their advantages and disadvantages</p> <p>-Reading of the goals of the unit.</p>	<p>Speaking</p> <p>Warming up</p> <p>Reading</p> <p>Previous knowledge</p>	<p>Share their opinions about different issues</p> <p>Raise awareness of the advantages and disadvantages of new technologies</p> <p>Analyze pictures and extract the relevant information</p> <p>Inform them about the goals they have to achieve in unit 9</p>	<p>C1</p> <p>C2</p> <p>C4</p>	<p>Textbook, projector, laptop</p>	<p>15'</p>	<p>S→T</p> <p>T→S</p>
<p>-Kahoot Quiz: 30 questions about the way in which communication has evolved from the ancient times to the present.</p>	<p>Speaking</p> <p>Previous knowledge</p>	<p>Broaden their cultural knowledge (evolution of communication along time)</p> <p>Teach them new ICT tools (kahoot)</p>	<p>C1</p> <p>C2</p> <p>C5</p>	<p>Kahoot , projector, laptop, and notebooks</p>	<p>10'</p>	<p>S→S</p> <p>S→T</p> <p>T→S</p>
<p>-Play the recording and tell the students to listen and repeat the expressions in purple. Match the expressions to the situations listed: welcome, good luck, bless you, congratulations, you're welcome (1-98).</p> <p>-Ask them which of the expressions are used for making introductions. Ask them which ones are formal/informal.</p> <p>- Simulate in pair a conversation where they have to use these expressions</p>	<p>Listening</p> <p>Speaking</p> <p>Vocabulary</p>	<p>Learn new vocabulary that can be useful for their day-to-day lives.</p> <p>Know the context in which each expression has to be used.</p>	<p>C1</p> <p>C3</p> <p>C6</p>	<p>Textbook, projector, laptop</p>	<p>10'</p>	<p>S→T</p> <p>T→S</p>


### UNIT 9 GETTING TOGETHER – SECOND SESSION

Activities	Skills	Goals	Comp.	Resources		Interaction
-Tell the students to write a short essay (10 lines) discussing where they would go if they could be exchange students, why and in what ways it would be different to their country. Post these writings on the school web so that exchange students can read it (inkle writer)	Listening Speaking Writing Vocabulary Grammar	Let them express themselves Improve their writing skills Lose fear to speak in public Put in the shoes of exchange students	C1 C3 C5 C6	Textbook, projector, laptop, Internet, inkle writer.	10'	S→T T→S
-Scan the article of page 99 and find information about internet sites and the services they do. -Listen to the recording as the students follow the text. -Solve the meaning of words: appointment, marketers, advertisers, identity, thieves, available and voice patterns.	Previous knowledge Listening Reading	Learn new vocabulary about ICT Learn to scan a text and extract the most important information.	C1 C5	Textbook, projector, laptop	20'	S→T T→S
-Tell the students to find the information given in the text (7,8-98) and the words for different definitions (9-98). - Explain the false friend “strangers”. Debate: ask the students if they complete surveys and questionnaires and if they think that it is right or wrong for people to sell their personal information.	Reading Vocabulary	Practice Reading comprehension Learn to summarize the most important information Learn new vocabulary	C1 C5 C6	Textbook, projector, laptop	10'	S→T T→S

### UNIT 9 GETTING TOGETHER – THIRD SESSION

Activities	Skills	Goals	Comp.	Resources		Interaction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Teach the students how to recognize a gerund and an infinitive and how to use them.</li> <li>-Give examples, and copy them in the blackboard.</li> <li>-Read and highlight the grammar in Spanish (WB-100).</li> <li>-Match the rules to the examples in exercise 1-100</li> <li>- Play a socrative quiz: 30 sentences in which students have to choose between infinitives and gerunds</li> </ul>	Grammar Reading Speaking	Learn and review grammatical aspects Learn to retain and summarize the most important information.	C1 C4	Textbook, projector, laptop, blackboard, Internet	15'	S→T T→S
-Complete two cultural texts dealing with the way teenagers use new ways of communication and social networks. Use the gerund (2,3-100)	Grammar Vocabulary	Broaden their cultural knowledge about ICT Practice the use of the gerund	C1 C3 C4 C5	Textbook, projector, laptop	20'	S→T T→S
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Make sentences about the things they like, dislike, avoid, are tired/afraid of. Use the gerund. Invent a collaborative story with these sentences.</li> <li>- Read some of stories aloud.</li> </ul>	Grammar Vocabulary Reading Speaking	Practice the use of the gerund Enhance their creativity	C1 C3 C4 C5	Textbook, projector, laptop	10'	S→T T→S
Write sentences with the words given in the exercise 5-100 changing the verbs to infinitives.	Grammar Vocabulary	Practice the use of the infinitive. Review the grammar	C1 C3 C5	Textbook, projector.	5'	S→T


### UNIT 9 GETTING TOGETHER – FOURTH SESSION


Activities	Skills	Goals	Comp	Resources	 Interaction
<p>-Complete exercises 6, 7 and 8-101. Ask them to fill the gaps with the infinitive form of the verbs, choose between infinitive and gerund and decide to write infinitive or gerund.</p> <p>-Ask some students if the sentences of exercise 8 are true or false for them.</p>	Grammar Vocabulary	Practice the grammar studied in the unit Express themselves in the second language.	C1 C5 C6	Textbook, projector, laptop	20' S→T T→S
<p>-Complete the text about Skype with the use of the infinitive and gerund.</p> <p>-Listen to the recording to check the answers (9, 10-101).</p> <p>-Write the words: set up, skilled, culinary, school fulfills and register and their translation in the blackboard.</p> <p>-Ask the students what they know about Skype. Fill in an online crossword</p> <p>-Give them some background information about its use, the history of its creation, its educational use, etc</p>	Grammar Previous knowledge Vocabulary	Review and practice grammatical aspects (gerund, infinitive) Learn new vocabulary related to ICT Broaden their knowledge about Skype and encourage them to use it to improve their English.	C1 C3 C5	Textbook, projector, laptop	15' S→T T→S
<p>-Ask questions about Skype (11-101) and answer them looking again at the previous text.</p>	Grammar Vocabulary	Practice the use of gerund and infinitive, questions and answers and let them express themselves and extract information from a text Use ICT.	C1 C4 C5	Textbook, projector, laptop	7' S→T T→S
<p>-Tell the students to ask and answers questions using the gerund/infinitive about several topics: ways of communicating with your friends, activities you cannot stand, your career plans. Use the expressions learned in the unit.</p>	Grammar Vocabulary Speaking	Practice the use of gerund and infinitive, questions and answers and let them express and share information with their partners	C1 C2 C3 C5 C6	Textbook, projector, laptop	8' S→T T→S






## UNIT 9 GETTING TOGETHER – FIFTH SESSION


Activities	Skills	Goals	Comp.	Resources		Interaction
-Real world: listen to a book excerpt about games and ask the students to follow it in their books. -Explain the meaning of the words: get along with, cops, request, nod. - False friends “discussing” and “sympathetic”	Reading Vocabulary Listening	Learn new vocabulary Practice listening, reading, attention and pronunciation Understand information from a text and extract the specific meaning.	C1  C3  C4  C6	Textbook, projector, laptop	15'	S→T  T→S
-Ask the students which of the statements of exercise 2-102 are not supported by the text. -Do exercises 3, 4, 5 - 102 (find synonyms to the words in the text, complete and answer to the questions with information extracted from the text they have read.	Grammar Vocabulary Reading	Scan and analyze a text. Learn new vocabulary Practice reading comprehension	C1  C3  C5	Textbook, projector, laptop	20'	S→T  T→S
Ask them which type of game they enjoyed playing when they were younger. Debate if they consider that there is a real difference between girls/boys games.	Speaking Listening Grammar Previous knowledge	Give their opinions Respect the opinions of their classmates. Exchange previous knowledge	C1  C3  C6	Textbook, projector, laptop	5'	S→T  T→S
-Give the students information about non-verbal communication and the differences that exist between the different countries (gestures, attitude). -Put it together: choose a correct option from a text dealing with grammar (gerund and infinitive, past, present and future, Answer true or false (7-102) to the sentences dealing with the previous exercise	Grammar Vocabulary Previous knowledge	Review the grammar seen in this unit and in the previous units Learn new vocabulary Broaden their cultural knowledge and teach them how to behave in the different countries and situations (gestures, vocabulary, expressions)	C1  C3  C4  C6	Textbook, projector, laptop	10'	S→T  T→S


UNIT 9 GETTING TOGETHER – SIXTH SESSION						
Activities	Skills	Goals	Comp.	Resources		Interaction
-Real English: Look at the advert for a social network site. -Play the recording and repeat the expressions in red. -Translate the expressions in their notebooks. -Ask them which of those expressions they can use to reject an invitation. -Match the expressions with its definition in exercise 3-104	Grammar Vocabulary Previous knowledge Speaking	Practice pronunciation Learn new ways to communicate in the different contexts Learn new vocabulary to maintain informal conversations with their friends in the second language.	C1 C2 C3 C6	Textbook, projector, laptop.	15'	S→T  T→S
-World builder: Explain the different phrasal verbs with stay (stay out, stay up, stay in, stay on and stay behind). -Translate them into Spanish and ask them to write a sentence with each of them -Complete the sentences in exercise 5-104 with the correct phrasal verb depending on the context	Grammar Vocabulary Translation	Learn new ways of using the same verb with different prepositions to refer to different things. Use the phrasal verbs in the different contexts Understand the differences between languages	C1 C3 C4 C5	Textbook, projector, laptop	15'	S→T  T→S
-Listen to a phone conversation between a girl and her friends talking about their plans. -Define the words: register for, bother and joking. -Ask them how many phone calls Anne makes	Listening Vocabulary	Practice the listening comprehension Learn new expressions to make plans Listen to a phone conversation different	C1 C3 C4 C6	Textbook, projector, laptop	10	S→T  T→S
-Answer the exercises 7, 8 dealing with the listening. Remember some details of the recording. -Make a summary	Listening comprehension Vocabulary	Extract the relevant information for a listening and prepare themselves for the exam Learn to summarize	C1 C3 C5 C6	Textbook, projector, laptop	10'	S→T  T→S

### UNIT 9 GETTING TOGETHER – SEVENTH SESSION

Activities	Skills	Goals	Comp.	Resources		Interaction
-Language builder: correct HW:20 -Speaking: match the questions with the possible answers dealing with the expressions used in the different context studied at the beginning of the unit.	Speaking Vocabulary Previous knowledge Warming up	Express themselves Know how to use the different expressions (context, register) Use translation as a pedagogical tool to compare both languages (L1 and L2)	C1 C3 C4	Textbook, projector, laptop	15'	S→T T→S
Say it right: Listen, recognize and repeat the sound of different words: love, that and do /ʌ/, /æ/ y /ü/.	Pronunciation Listening	Teach them how to read the phonetic symbols and pronounce the words correctly	C1 C3 C4	Textbook, projector, laptop	15'	S→T T→S
Complete a dialogue with the expressions about making plans (that's a great idea, I don't feel like, see you then, etc). Simulate a conversation in which you have to plan going to the cinema.	Speaking Vocabulary Grammar	Review and put into practice the vocabulary used in the unit	C1 C3	Textbook, projector, laptop	10'	S→T T→S
Tell the students to maintain a dialogue in pairs. Student A has to look at the phone calendar and the posters on page 105, and student B look at the phone calendar and posters on page 141. Make plans finding those activities that they can both go. Use time expressions, expressions to make plans, and the vocabulary (phrasal verbs, etc) studied.	Speaking Listening	Analyze pictures Express themselves in the SL Make plans Use the vocabulary studied (expressions, cultural vocabulary)	C1 C3 C4 C5	Textbook, projector, laptop	10'	S→T T→S

### UNIT 9 GETTING TOGETHER – EIGHT SESSION

Activities	Skills	Goals	Comp.	Resources		Interaction
Writing and Reading: read an informal e-mail to the students. Translate the words first-aid kit and nightmare. Ask the students about the topic, the time, the place, the activities and the future plans the writer talks about. Remember them that in informal language they can use: contractions, everyday expressions, and informal punctuation.	Reading Grammar Vocabulary	Communicate in an informal register Learn the instruction of informal language Extract the information from an email	C1 C2 C4 C6	Textbook, projector, laptop	15'	S→T T→S
Write in groups an informal e-mail following the model. (WB:119) Tell a friend something that has happened to you (holiday, trip, weekend at home, etc). Select the informal expressions of exercise 2-106 and include them in the writing. Remember them to take into account organization, paragraphing and punctuation. Read some of the compositions aloud.	Writing Speaking Reading	Communicate in a register they can use in their daily lives when they talk with a friend Teach them how to use ICT. Put the grammar and vocabulary learn in the unit into practice.	C1 C2 C4 C6	Textbook, projector, laptop	20'	S→T T→S
Reading: Read about the cultural differences in non-verbal communication, punctuality and dinning custom between the different countries and answer the questions: 136-137 (debate)	Reading Vocabulary Pronunciation	Broaden their cultural knowledge Teach them to respect other cultures and traditions Awaken their interest toward other cultures.	C1 C2 C4 C6	Textbook, projector, laptop	15'	S→T T→S

UNIT 9 GETTING TOGETHER – NINTH SESSION						
Activities	Skills	Goals	Comp.	Resources		Interaction
Real life: Tell the student to read a list of activities (1-107) and decide which of them they do before a party and at the party.	Speaking Vocabulary	Learn vocabulary they can use in informal and real life situations like a party Show that they have acquired the contents proposed for this unit	C1 C4 C5 C6	Textbook, projector, laptop	15'	S→T T→S
Tell the students to match the statements of exercise 2-107 to the possible responses and practice this conversation with their partners.	Speaking Vocabulary	Practice questioning and answering and the vocabulary dealing with expressions and plans	C1 C4 C6	Textbook, projector, laptop	20'	S→T T→S
Complete a dialogue with the different registers (formal and informal) about situations they can experience: give and receive pieces of advice, offer help, express opinions	Vocabulary Speaking	Practice the different communication registers both orally and in writing. Use the vocabulary studied	C1 C4 C5 C6	Textbook, projector, laptop	5'	S→T T→S
English language learning roulette. Students have to spin an online roulette (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and each time they will review a different skill depending on the place it stops	Previous knowledge Grammar and vocabulary	Resolve doubts for the exam Self-assessment	C1	Textbook, projector, laptop	10'	S→T T→S

3rd TERM	UNIT 10- BYE BYE PREJUDICES!	SESSIONS: 5
OBJECTIVES		CONTENT
Revise reading strategies, vocabulary and word building, grammar, communicative skills and writing Improve your English competence as you prepare for the future. Avoid the prejudices towards the other cultures Learn how to use ICT: Skype Practice vocabulary related to the German and Spanish cultures Exchange information in a polite way with your foreign mate. Use English as a vehicular language between non-native speakers		<b>BLOCK 1: Listening, comprehension and speaking</b> Listen to a Spanish girl talking about her exchange experience in Germany Maintain an Skype conversation with your German mate talking about gastronomy /feasts/ famous buildings/ sports/ clothes/ education/ health care /traditions/ religion Maintain an Skype conversation between families of the Spanish and German student <b>BLOCK 2: Reading and writing</b> Read an article about life in Berlin vs life in Desdren Read a magazine article about German and Spanish prejudices. Write an informal e-mail introducing yourself to your new pen friend and explaining him/her who you are, where do you live, what do you like doing, etc. Write a blog entry in inkle writer with the differences and similitudes between both cultures <b>BLOCK 3: Knowledge of the language</b> Practice all the verbal tenses (present simple/continuous, past simple/continuous, future simple/continuous, present perfect simple/continuous, passive voice, modals and conditionals). Vocabulary related to costumes, gastronomy, fests, education, and architecture. <b>BLOCK 4: Socio cultural aspects and intercultural awareness</b> German culture and lifestyle (food, festivities, education, architecture, night life) Cross-cultural communication (Spanish vs German students)
COMPETENCES		
C1 /C3/C4/C5/C6		
MATERIALS		
Projector, internet, Textbook, Workbook, blackboard, notebook, inklewriter,		
ASSESSMENT		METHODOLOGY
Formative assessment		Grammar-Translation Communicative Language Teaching

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### **3. INNOVATION PROJECT**

#### **FOSTERING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE (ICC) AND CULTURAL VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE IN SPANISH SECONDARY SCHOOL VIA SKYPE**

##### **Abstract**

Culture has long been seen as a fundamental component of language learning. In spite of its widely recognized importance, there is not real consensus on the way culture should be integrated into language learning or the role that new technologies can play in this process. In this project we would try to explain the way in which Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), especially Skype, can integrate culture in English language teaching and learning. The main purpose is to reconsider the use of telecollaboration in the acquisition of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) and explain how Spanish students can improve their cultural vocabulary and practice their second language (SL) by means of virtual conversations with German students. Besides, it is necessary to study the traditional methods used throughout the last decades and analyze the advantages and disadvantages that telecollaboration, specifically via Skype, may have in a secondary classroom. This project is designed for Spanish and German students belonging to the fourth year of Secondary education, A2 level from the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)- At the end of the project our students should gain new cultural vocabulary related to the topics they have worked with their German partners. Thus, their cultural awareness will be fostered and their ICC developed.

**Keywords:** Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC), Telecollaboration, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), Skype.

##### **Resumen**

La cultura ha sido siempre un componente fundamental dentro del aprendizaje de lenguas. Sin embargo, a pesar de su reconocida importancia, no existe consenso real sobre la forma en la que podría ser integrada en el aprendizaje de una lengua y sobre el papel que las nuevas tecnologías podrían jugar en este proceso. En este proyecto intentaremos explicar la manera en

que las Tecnologías de la Información y la Comunicación (TIC), en particular Skype, pueden integrar la cultura en la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de la lengua extranjera: inglés. El propósito de este trabajo consiste en reconsiderar el uso de la telecolaboración en la Competencia Comunicativa Intercultural (CCI) y en explicar cómo los estudiantes españoles pueden mejorar su vocabulario cultural y practicar su segunda lengua (SL) mediante conversaciones virtuales con alumnos alemanes. Además, haremos un recorrido por los métodos tradicionales utilizados a lo largo de las últimas décadas y analizaremos las ventajas y las desventajas que la telecolaboración via Skype puede tener en las clases de secundaria. Este proyecto ha sido diseñado para estudiantes españoles y alemanes pertenecientes al último curso de educación secundaria, con un nivel A2 según el Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas (MCER). Al finalizar el trabajo los estudiantes deben haber adquirido vocabulario cultural sobre los temas trabajados con sus compañeros alemanes. De esta forma se fomentará su conciencia cultural y su CCI será desarrollada.

**Palabras clave:** Competencia Comunicativa Intercultural (CCI), Telecolaboración, Tecnologías de la Información y la Comunicación (TIC), skype.

## **1. Introduction**

As Candlin and Mercers (2001:1) claim, “no language teaching and learning takes place in a classroom which is isolated from the world of experiences and personal engagements and investments of learners outside the classroom”. There is no doubt that we are living in times of great change. As educators who prepare our students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we should be aware of many changes occurring globally. Population mobility continues throughout the world at an all-time high in human history. As Jackson (2014) explains, there are several reasons for learning more about intercultural communication and the impact of language in intercultural relations. Because of globalizing forces, transportation and technological advances, or changing conflict situations, intercultural communication is now more important than ever before. Language, as the central semiotic system of any given human culture and society is very closely integrated into the cultural, social and psychological fabric of life (Witte: 2000). Thus, through interaction with people from diverse linguistic and cultural

backgrounds, we can learn more about ourselves and discover different ways to build intercultural relationships.

Our cultural orientation begins at birth. As we grow and learn our first language we become costumed to particular ways of being. As Brown and Eisterhold (2004: 25) point out “through interaction members of a given culture socialize and are socialized by others”. For this reason, language plays a vital role in this cultural process. Students acquire language and culture together in what is an integrated process; at an early age they learn sociocultural content by way of language-mediated interactions. In other words, in the context of foreign language education, intercultural competence is linked to communicative competence. As explained by the Council of Europe (2001) communicative competence refers to a person’s ability to act in a foreign language in a linguistically, sociolinguistically and pragmatically appropriate way, whereas intercultural communicative competence is the knowledge, skills and attitudes which build on communicative competence (Bryam: 2001) .

Being able to cope with intercultural experiences requires that a person possesses a number of characteristics. These characteristics are the willingness to engage with the foreign culture, self-awareness and the ability to look upon oneself from the outside. Students should be able to see the world through the other’s eyes, cope with the uncertainty, act as a cultural mediators, evaluate other’s points of view, and to consciously use culture learning skills (Gupta: 2002).

As language and culture go hand in hand, the main purpose of this dissertation is to propose a tool that can raise students cultural awareness, avoid the prejudices they may have towards the target culture and increase at the same time the amount of cultural vocabulary. The fall in the price of information and communication has meant that high schools can possess computers, laptops or whiteboards at little expense. This fact together with the increase popularity of Web 2.0 and tools such Skype has led to a new way of learning foreign languages.

For the purpose of this dissertation, the concept of culture and Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC), their different definitions and their relationship with pedagogy will be studied in section 2.1. Section 2.2 will be devoted to the analysis of telecollaboration and the possibilities and hurdles that

exist if teachers want to integrate it into English language teaching. Besides, this part will also present our students' need to acquire new cultural vocabulary, a fact that will allow them to better understand the target culture. Finally, we propose the use of Skype to integrate culture between secondary students belonging to different cultures- German and Spanish. Furthermore, the expected results according to previous research will be provided, and as a final note, personal conclusions and limitations of the study will be offered with the purpose of shedding light on future improvements that could be made, as well as on issues that may arise during treatment

## **2. Literature review**

As Sercu (2002) remarks, the world is becoming more and more interconnected due to the appearance of global travel and instant communication. However, it is important to bear in mind that change does not only affect to industry, health, politics and business but also to education. The presence of ethnic and linguistic minority children in schools is becoming an everyday phenomenon. As Mendez Garcia and Sercu (2005:50) explain, teachers should not only provide students with opportunities for learning, but also with chances to get better and reach their full potential. It is obvious that Foreign Language teachers have to improve learners' proficiency in the foreign language (FL) taking into account several elements such as age, abilities, interests and so on. Nevertheless, aspects dealing with Intercultural Competence are often left aside, that is to say, the levels of understanding of other cultures or their attitudes towards foreigners. It is becoming very common to find intercultural objectives included in curricula, and teachers have the responsibility to promote the acquisition of intercultural competence through their teaching. It is clear the presence of interculturality in the teaching and learning of a FL and as Sercu (2005: 1) states, "bringing a foreign language to the classroom means connecting learners to a world that is culturally different from their own". In this vein, not only should FL teachers promote intercultural communication in the students, but at the same time, students have to show interest towards the other cultures they are exposed to.

In order to infer its importance in Foreign Language Learning (FLL), the first step that should be covered is the definition of the concept *Intercultural communication* (IC). Rogers and Steinfatt (1999: 1) define IC as “the exchange of information between individuals who are unlike culturally” In the same vein, Müller-Jacquier (2004:295) considers that IC denotes “a peculiar situation: the varied language and discourse strategies people from different cultural backgrounds use in direct, face-to face situations”. Finally, Zhua Hua (2011: 422) offers us a broaden vision that allows us to better understand this concept. For this applied linguistic, IC refers to “a situation where people from different cultural backgrounds come into contact with each other; or a subject of study that is concerned with interactions among people from different cultural and ethnic groups and comparative studies of communication patterns across cultures”.

Once we have defined this concept, it is also important to differentiate between several issues that may cause controversy. The first differentiation that should be made is between intercultural and interpersonal communication. The first type of communication is the one we are going to focus on in this study and as Jackson (2014) explains, and as it has been abovementioned, this refers to the communication between individuals or groups who belong to different cultural groups or have been socialized in different cultural environments. On the other hand, as Lustig and Koester (2010:19) point out, interpersonal communication involves a smaller number of interlocutors who interact exclusively with one another. As it is going to be explained along this project, nowadays, intercultural interaction can take place in several ways: by means of face-to-face encounters, through writing (e-mails) or via online (Skype, Facebook, e-Twinning). In this project we have decided to use Skype as the tool to carry out these cultural exchanges, as it allows us to exploit ICT and maintain face-to-face conversations at the same time.

Other important distinction is between intercultural and cross-cultural communication. Whereas the first concept involves interaction between people from different backgrounds, the second concept refers to the comparison of communication behaviors and patterns in two or more cultures. In other words, as Jackson (2014: 3) explains, “cross-cultural communication research typically compares and contrast native discourse and communication behaviors (or

styles) in different cultures”. In contrast, “intercultural communication research involves an investigation of intercultural interaction between individuals (or groups) from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds” (2014:3).

There is not only one type of Intercultural communication. Bryam (1990) proposes three different types: (i) people of different languages and countries where one is native speaker of the language used; (ii) people of different languages and countries where the language used is a lingua franca, and (iii) people of the same country but different language, one of whom is a native speaker of the language used (1990: 22).

We have already defined what different linguists understand as Intercultural communication, so it is time now to go beyond and explain the term Intercultural Competence.

The term “competence” has been widely defined by different experts, nevertheless, in this case we have decided to choose the definition provided by the OECD (2005: 4), given that it helps us to understand that “a competency is more than just knowledge and skills. It involves the ability to meet complex demands by drawing on and mobilizing psychosocial resources (including skills and attitudes) in a particular context”. Intercultural Competence can be acquired in a number of environments such as living in a different sociocultural environment, studying abroad or adapting to other ways of life. However, living in a foreign country does not always guarantee the acquisition of that type of competence. As Witte (2000: 89) remarks, if the learners want to develop intercultural competence, their affection, cognition and behavior will be essential. In spite of the fact the term Intercultural competence has been widely discussed and rarely understood within the educational field (Deardorff, 2006), experts have reached a consensus definition for this term. Intercultural competence is “the effective and appropriate behavior and communication in intercultural situations” (Deardoff, 2006; Bryam 2011). In order to get a broader understanding of this concept, we should analyze its different parts, that is to say, the attitudes, knowledge, skills as well as its the internal and external outcomes.

First of all, the attitudes the students present towards different people in respect of cultural meanings, beliefs and behaviors and which are, as Bryam (1990:34) remarks, “implicit in their interaction with interlocutors from their own

social group or others". These attitudes are curiosity, openness and discovery and imply willingness to risk and escape from one's comfort zone. Students have to reflect upon their own beliefs and behaviors and analyze them from the point of view of the others. It is important to show the members of the other cultures that they are valued. The way students can achieve this feeling is by means of showing interest and listening attentively to others' cultures.

Secondly, in regard to knowledge also known as the first savoir, Bryam (1997) defines it as "knowledge about social groups and their cultures in one's own country, and similar knowledge of the interlocutor's country on the one hand, and similar knowledge of the processes and interaction at individual and societal levels on the other hand" (1997:35). This includes the knowledge of the different practices, traditions, beliefs or products in one's own and the others speech community. Students acquire conscious and unconscious knowledge of both the social groups to which they belong, that is to say, cultural self-awareness, and of those groups with which they have contact. What is more, the knowledge they acquire can be representative of the group (clothes), or can differentiate them from the others (religion, values, or history) (Byram 1990).

Besides, students should develop different skills: observation, listening, evaluating, interpreting, analyzing and relating the documents and elements of the other culture. Skills are commonly dependent from the knowledge of one's own culture and the other environment.

As Bryam (1990:35) states, these attitudes, knowledge and skills lead us to an internal outcome that consists of different characteristics such as flexibility, adaptability and empathy. Teachers should make sure that students develop this last characteristic as from then on they will be able to see the world from the other's perspective and therefore, they will treat the others as they would like to be treated.

Finally, if we put all the previous elements (knowledge, skills and internal outcomes) together, we reach the external outcome, in other words, the behavior and communication between the students, a factor that will be essential in the development of our innovative project, in which students will have to demonstrate they have acquired cultural knowledge and skills and that they are able to keep in touch with people belonging to other culture.

As Müller-Hartmann (2000) explains, much acquisition of this ICC takes place within an educational setting. It is evident that the objectives of this type of projects are very demanding in comparison with the ones usually proposed in the secondary classrooms. Although some objectives can be introduced as part of the curriculum, other objectives may not be fully integrated in the classroom setting. These limitations that appear in the classroom setting could be overcome if we carry learning beyond the classroom walls (Bryam: 1990). Mobility programmes, and exchanges are becoming more and more popular, thus, through the use of real and virtual communication via new technologies we could overcome all the hurdles that we may come across.

In the next part of the dissertation we will explore the possibilities of improving students' cultural vocabulary as well as fostering their ICC through the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), especially via Skype, engaging in face-to-face conversations to two different groups of students located in geographically distant places.

### **3. Cultural vocabulary, ICC and telecollaboration via Skype**

Intercultural communication is not a new phenomenon. Since individuals had to communicate with other people who did not speak the same language they felt the need of using IC, and nowadays, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, dialogue between speakers belonging to different countries and cultures has become unavoidable (Grein & Weigand: 2007). The first step that has to be covered at this point of the work is the analysis of the current trends that were used in the past and that are used today for the learning and teaching of ICC in FLT.

If there is something clear at this point it is the fact that the FL curriculum must deal with the otherness and the difference. In other words, it is essential to defend diversity in the setting of languages and cultures as the transmission of culture is going to be guided by the different languages that exist in the globe. As O'Dowd and Waire (2009) put across, FL educators have decided to make use of networked technologies in order to bring the learning into contact with students from the other side of the world. The main purpose of this activity is to integrate ICC in the school curriculum. This innovative task is called telecollaboration and as these authors say "it can contribute to the development



of areas as learner autonomy, linguistic accuracy and fluency, online intercultural communication skills and intercultural awareness” (2009:173)

Telecollaboration is a form of network-based learning (Kern, Ware & Warschauer 2004). In spite of the fact this is a relatively new practice; several authors have already defined the term “telecollaboration”. According to Helm (2015) it is “the practice of engaging classes of geographical dispersed learners in online intercultural exchange using the internet communication tools for the development of language or intercultural competence” (2015: 197). This activity has also received the name of Online Intercultural Exchange (OIE) (O’Dowd 2007) or Internet-mediated Intercultural Foreign Language Education (ICFLE) (Belz and Thorne 2006). The idea of connecting students through virtual interaction with learners of other linguistic and cultural backgrounds gives teachers the possibility to approach task-based learning from a perspective different to the traditional ones that used to be carried out in the FL classrooms in the past. Whereas those task activities performed in the classroom (monolingual and mono-cultural context) may limit the negotiation of linguistic and cultural meaning (Hampshire & Aguarales Anoro, 2004), telecollaborative activities offer higher opportunities to negotiate meaning and explore the characteristics of the different cultures as they are developed in linguistic and cultural communities (O’Dowd 2009:174).

Along the last twenty years, telecollaboration has suffered an evolution as a pedagogic approach and new models have emerged, each one with different goals. The earliest models to be set up are the Cultura model (O’Dowd 2009) and Tandem Learning (Brammerts 2001; Canga Alonso 2011). These exchanges involve learners from different countries engaging in bilingual interaction.

Through e-tandem exchanges (O’Rourke 2005) students from different classes and with different languages communicate with the aim of learning one’s another language, that is to say, the main goal is the development of the linguistic competence (Bower & Kawaguchi 2011, Vinagre & Muñoz 2011). Cultura model is what O’Dowd (2011) has called “blended intercultural model”. Unlike tandem, the main purpose of this model is to elicit cultural differences and similarities and develop not only the language competence but also the intercultural competence (Belz (2002).

As time goes by, interaction evolves, and today, those bilingual exchanges are not even necessary, they can be multilingual, monolingual, or adopt a lingua franca (Lee 2006, O'Dowd 2006) as we have decided to do in our innovative project, in which both, Spanish and German students will have to maintain Skype conversations using English as a lingua franca.

Within the framework of telecollaboration, teachers play an essential role. They have the responsibility to organize the tasks, monitor the different activities that will be carried out and provide feedback and support for learners. Although this interaction has traditionally been text based, oral communication is also becoming increasingly popular (O'Dowd 2011).

Several tools are becoming available to learners, from the traditional forums to web 2.0 such as wikis, blogs (Dooly 2008, Guth & Thomas 2010) and video-conferencing such as skype (Develotte, Guichon & Vincent 2010). As Thorne (2006) explains, telecollaboration has become one of the most important references of the intercultural exchange in FL education. Besides, as Kern et al explain this activity allows teachers to:

use the internet not so much to teach the same thing in a different way, but rather to help students enter into a new realm of collaborative equity and construction of knowledge, viewing their expanding repertoire of identities and communication strategies as resources in the process (2004:21).

In spite of the evolution this communication method has suffered, there are still some hurdles and misunderstandings that may appear due to different institutional and course demands or due to the different access to technology that each country possesses. Many teachers consider that using the internet and connecting the students with groups of native speakers may become the perfect opportunity to leave aside the traditional textbook. Nevertheless, it is not as easy as it may seem. Even with the full involvement of the teacher and the organization of the activities, success is not guaranteed. Telecollaborative projects can cause hurt feelings and even reinforcement of negative stereotypes (Godwin-Jones: 2013). There are different reasons that may explain the appearance of these problems: lack of language skills, insufficient information about the culture or simply individual insensitivity. O'Dowd and Ritter (2006) have already identified those factors that may cause a failure in communication.

At an individual level, students' motivation, stereotypes, previous knowledge, ICC, and expectations are going to influence the results of the project. Besides, if we take into account the classroom environment, other issues such as the relationship between teachers, the task design and the dynamics could also make problems appear. Finally, in the interaction of the students misunderstandings provoked by communication styles, behaviors and non-verbal communication, may lead to failure. Written exchanges via e-mail lack paralinguistic and non-verbal communication that can be of paramount importance for understanding the real purpose of the speakers. For this reason, video-based language exchanges (i.e. skype) are becoming more and more popular, as they allow the students to maintain conversations similar to the ones they have face-to-face. In this way, through the use of Skype, as it is going to be explained in the following section, both teachers and students can avoid the problems abovementioned and carry out a successful intercultural exchange. Even following all these requisites success is not assured. As Godwin-Jones (2013) remarks, despite having cultural understanding they may not understand some aspects of the language such as idiomatic expressions, or tonal variations such as humor or irony. Nevertheless, these communication failures may be fruitful to raise students' awareness about the need to improve their communicative skills.

According to Belz (2002), if teachers want to avoid problems they should sensitize students of such institutional and cultural differences they are going to encounter. There are several ways of doing so, such as studying intercultural theoretical textbooks or through online personal accounts of experiences other foreigners have experimented (O'Dowd 2005:42).

As stated in the introduction, the purpose of our innovative project is to introduce ICC, that is to say, we want our students to interact effectively with people from other countries, be empathetic, avoid stereotypes and misunderstandings and increase their cultural language and vocabulary in an indirect way. At the end of the course students should have increased their cultural vocabulary register. This cultural vocabulary will be raised by means of different tasks and conversations that students will have to maintain with their German partners. In order to understand the next part of the project, it is convenient to make clear the different notions the concept of "culture" implies

(source, target and international culture). To begin with, source culture (SC) refers to the native culture of the students. Then, Target culture (TC) is the one involved in the study of a foreign language (Canga Alonso and Cifone Ponte, 2016). Finally, the term International culture (IC) involves a variety of cultures set in English-speaking countries or other places around the globe. This latter type of culture can be used to raise students' awareness about the importance English has for international purposes. (Crystal, 2000).

As Mukoroli (2011) remarks, vocabulary teaching and learning is a constant challenge for teachers as well as students, as there has been minimal focus on vocabulary development in the EFL classroom during the last decades. Besides, it has been proved that vocabulary instruction improves comprehension, for this reason, if students are able to combine and assimilate this cultural vocabulary, they will be also able to comprehend the foreign culture and accept it. Words differ from language to language both in their form and meaning and are affected by the background in which they occur (Williams, 1976; Wierzbicka, 1997) Besides, as words usually encode load of meaning and connotations, an incorrect use or lack of understanding of the culture that surround them can lead to a breakdown in communication (Baker, 2013)

To sum up, culture has been considered something inherent to language and its lexicon, nevertheless, little research has been carried out in the field of culture-related vocabulary and intercultural exchanges via ICT (Skype) in secondary education. For this reason, in the light of the reviewed literature, the present study sets out to find answers to the following research questions:

RQ1. Can telecollaboration improve cultural vocabulary?

RQ2. Can new technologies broaden the cultural knowledge of the students?

RQ3. Are students more interested in the other culture after intercultural exchanges?

## **4. Method**

### **4.1. Participants**

A total of 15-16 year-old secondary school students from Germany and Spain will take part in the project. Each group of students will belong to a different country (Spain and Germany) so they are going to be geographically distant- 30

4<sup>th</sup> grade Spanish secondary school students and 30 German students belonging of their same age. The level of English proficiency that is expected for last year secondary school students is an A2 or lower-intermediate according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR 2001), so the topic and materials used for the telecollaboration exchange will be carefully selected to match that level. As it is explained in the curriculum, the main goal of learning a language in a globalized world is to understand and produce oral and written texts, according to their level of knowledge, in the FL. Furthermore, two of the most important competences that the curriculum remarks are the ICC and ICT. As Roldan Tapia (2005) explains, “the development of intercultural competence is a European educational goal which tries to give the appropriate answer to the linguistic and cultural diversity that is observed in the respective societies”. Adaptations have to be made if after the initial contact there are students who show a lower or higher level of proficiency in the language in order to fit individual needs.

#### **4.2. Instruments**

Task based activities are central elements of foreign language teaching, and telecollaboration gives teachers and students the opportunity to carry out task-based learning from a different perspective to the traditional one. As Blake (2000) points out, telecollaboration programmes are known for adopting task-based approaches. These tasks should integrate the development of language, intercultural competence and online literacies (Helm and Guth, 2010). According to O’Dowd and Ware (2009), this task should be divided into three different parts: information exchange, comparison analysis and collaboration and product creation tasks. Together with these activities, as the Council of Europe’s *Common European Framework of Reference* (2001) considers, intercultural skills, sociocultural knowledge and ability to learn and study skills should also be taken into account. The study will last a whole month, a total of five sessions, once per week. As it has been mentioned in the second section of this dissertation, this project will be carried out as if it was an extra unit of the textbook (see unit 10), in which students will have to develop a number of tasks

that will allow both teachers and students to prove the importance of IC and become familiarized with ICT (Skype).

The first task involves learners providing their partners with information about themselves, their personalities, their lifestyles, their schools, their families, their towns or aspects of their home cultures (see table 1). Teachers are commonly familiar with the requirements of the group they are in charge and they are mostly sure of those tasks that will lead to positive results. Nevertheless, neither German nor Spanish students will be totally close to one another if they do not exploit those topics they have in common (hobbies, and personal interests). Pre-exchange questionnaires can give both Spanish and German teachers clues to select the topics students want to discuss with their telecollaborative partners. The thematic content of this activity requires careful consideration As O'Dowd (2009) remarks; these can function as introductory activities for those groups who are not familiar with each other, therefore, a great deal of cultural sensitivity and intercultural skills of discovery and interaction needed are required to be successful in the implementation of a task like this. This activity will also allow students to broaden their own cultural knowledge and the knowledge of the culture of their partners. As Belz (2002) states, students have to develop cultural self-awareness as they are forced to reflect on the home image they want to transmit to the other class. It is also important to bear in mind that both groups belong to the same level as a lack of proficiency in the FL may lead to misunderstanding or can give an image of lack of openness and friendliness. In the following table are presented all the questions students should prepare with the aid of the teacher.

	SPANISH	GERMAN
Name, age, personality		
Family and friends		
Hobbies and interests		
Studies (favourite subjects)		
Houses and towns		

Table 1. Students' background information

The second exercise is a comparison and analysis task and it does not only require an information exchange but also comparisons of different aspects from

both cultures such as products or traditions. With these tasks students interchange information about cultural products and practices and they can become aware of the similarities and differences between the two cultures. Besides, as shown in table 2, students will be given three different topics for discussion (food and drink, festivals and school). Each topic contains several cultural words belonging to the Source culture, Target culture and International Culture. With this information students have to explain to their German partners the connotations and meanings these words have in their own cultures. Besides, at the end of the month they should write a final essay containing the cultural words studied, in which they present the similarities and differences that exist between both cultures in regard with the aforementioned topics. As Fischer (1998) explains, teachers should avoid to the extent possible allowing students to enter into discussions about stereotypes as there are likely to end in a heated debate, nevertheless, if we allow students to become familiar with the lives and backgrounds of their partners it can lead to a better understanding of the TC. Cultural knowledge and vocabulary are fostered by means of the development of this assignment.

Cultural topic	Cultural words (semantic field)
Food and drink	Paella, Tortilla de patata, Gazpacho, sangría (SC), Currywurst, Sauerkraut, Brezel, Berliner Weiße, Fish and chips (TC), hamburger, coke (IC)
Festivals	San Mateo (SC), Oktoberfest, Guy Fawkes' Night (TC), Christmas, Easter, Carnival (IC),
School	DELE A2, EBAU (SC), A- level, GSCE, ABITUR (TC) marks, subjects, uniform, (IC).

Table 2. Cultural topics

Finally, at the end of the project students will self-assess their experience by means of a questionnaire designed by the teacher (see table 3) focusing on the feelings they have had in the development of the different activities and they will have to write a post (50-60 words) in the blog of the school telling about the experience they have lived with their German partners in order to encourage other students and teachers to carry out this telecollaborative project.

	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Agree	4. Strongly agree
Did I enjoy maintaining Skype conversations?				
Do I feel confident using ICT?				
Has my cultural vocabulary improved?				
Has my opinion towards German people and culture changed?				
Has my interest towards the target culture risen?				
Did I like the topics discussed during the exchanges?				

Table 3. Final questionnaire

### 4.3. Procedures

Participants are informed of the study that the teacher wants to carry out and are given consent forms for their parents or guardians to sign, together with a statement asking for permission to film the collaborative exchanges that will take place. Once the total number of available participants is clearly stated, the teacher passes the students the pre-exchange questionnaire to retrieve information on what kind of topics they are interested in. Afterwards, both the German and the Spanish teachers recollect the information and choose those topics that both groups have in common.

Before starting the exchange, students will have to prepare individually a presentation in which they will explain their German partners who they are, how they are, where do they live, who are they families and friends, the aspect of their hometowns, etc. The aim of this preparatory activity is to engage students in a spontaneous interaction with the teacher who will tell them what they are going to encounter and how they should behave.

The telecollaborative project will cover a whole month, in which students will be given three different topics: *food and drink*, *festivities and school*, each topic with its correspondent cultural words (see table 2 above). We have decided to



choose these three topics as the students may find them interesting and they present more contrast and differences than any other. Each topic presents its related cultural words. For example for the topic “festivals”, Spanish students from Logroño will have to explain their partners the festivity of San Mateo (traditions, costumes, dances). In the same vein, German students will explain Spanish pupils what “Oktoberfest” is. We have also decided to include intercultural festivities such as carnival, Christmas and Easter, which despite being celebrated in many places, they present differences from one country to another. Each topic will be discussed in a session, and at the end of the month each pair of students (German and Spanish) must provide the teachers with a collaborative presentation and an 80-100 word composition showing the differences and similarities that exist between both cultures. These compositions should include at least 20 cultural words that have appeared during their Skype conversations. Each conversation will be filmed in order to analyze subtle details such as intonation, politeness or nonverbal communication. Each Friday, students will also be given the opportunity to share their feelings and opinions with the teacher and their classmates, but they are not obliged to do so if they do not feel confident. During each session, the teacher will take notes on the performance, behavior and improvement of the students’ spontaneous speeches and interactions.

Finally, at the end of the month students will have to write an individual post in the blog of the school telling the rest of the students about their experiences, how they have felt, how their views about the other culture have changed, what they have learned about the German culture.

In addition to these tasks, students will complete a short questionnaire to self-assess their outcomes with regard to their openness and willingness towards the target culture. Their responses are presented in a four-point Likert scale (see table 3 above) for interpretation purposes. After this information is collected, the teachers perform qualitative data analysis to determine whether students have improved their ICC and cultural vocabulary.

Data analysis will be performed by classifying and obtaining quantities and percentages using Microsoft Excel both for the students’ responses to the tasks and questionnaires. Besides, as it has been abovementioned, the Skype exchanges will be recorded and analyzed by both teachers.

## **5. Results**

Based on the previous review of the literature, the results are expected to be positive. It is foreseeable that by means of using Skype and a task-based approach, students' cultural vocabulary and ICC will increase, as they will be exposed to more cultural environments than they would if they had not taken part in this project.

To answer RQ1 (Can telecollaboration improve cultural vocabulary?) we will analyze task 2 in which students, as it has been explained, have to maintain conversations with their German partners about several topics (food and drink, school and festivities) and put the cultural words related to these topics into practice through the elaboration of a final composition in which they compare both cultures. Then, through the first and second task, the final essay and the self-assessment questionnaire we can answer RQ2 (Can new technologies broaden the cultural knowledge of the students?) and RQ3 (Are students more interested in the other culture after intercultural exchanges?). These intercultural exchanges will help Spanish students learn and understand the German culture, and therefore, this fact will awake their interest toward the TC and they will realize that most of their behavior is culturally conditioned. Besides, in the development of the introductory task and in all the Skype conversations, they will have to represent their own culture so they will probably discover facts about Spanish culture they did not know before. The opinions of the students will be also taken into consideration (self-assessment questionnaire and final essay) and shared with the German teacher in order to evaluate the experience and encourage other secondary teachers to take part in this innovative project.

At the end of project, it is expected that students will improve their interaction skills, and other non-verbal elements such as intonation or gestures, which are as important as the verbal or cultural elements. Hence their competence in linguistic communication will be fostered since students will use English in all their interactions with their German counterparts.

## **6. Discussion**

Europe is changing its face and we, as EFL teachers, are the responsible agents for language teaching. Previous literature has confirmed that telecollaboration has positive effects regarding cultural knowledge and vocabulary, but few scholars have focused on the application of this activity on the secondary education classrooms. Nowadays, students are not required to acquire new contents but they should be able to interact with other cultures and foster Intercultural Communication. This diversity is even noticeable in Spanish secondary school classroom where we find teenagers from different social and cultural backgrounds. Hence, a virtual exchange is quite different from a study period abroad, and it may lead to misunderstandings if teachers don't organize it properly (Helm, 2013). However, it may also offer students a powerful intercultural experience as they are in contact with people from different parts of the globe. It is commonly stated that virtual exchanges can be valid and cheaper alternatives to physical mobility. What is more, many studies have proved that students who have had experiences with telecollaboration are often more interested in visiting other countries (Helm, 2015: 209). Thus, the present innovation project offers students the chance to live an exchange experience with German students via Skype, an activity that will probably result in the development of their intercultural awareness.

On the other hand, the English native speaker would be the perfect interlocutor as they can play the role of language experts, can correct the mistakes the non-native speakers commit and can provide them with cultural information about the countries where English is spoken (Helm and Guth, 2010). Nevertheless, recent studies propose using a common language, as we have decided in this project. The increase in "lingua franca" exchanges, that is to say, the exchange carried out between German and Spanish students (non-native speakers of English) makes an interesting move away from the native speaker ideology, which has been widely criticized by language learning researchers (Kramsch 1997). The lingua franca, in this case English, acts as a unifying factor. Both groups of students, German and Spanish, start out from a situation of equality, which is a beneficial factor for cultural integration. This benefit may be due to the fact that students are more likely to communicate with non-native speakers than with native speakers. Besides, learners confess being less anxious when interacting with non-native speakers, as they usually

associate with FL learning the fear of making mistakes- and the contact language can be useful for cementing feelings of proximity and support (Guarda, 2013). With the development of all the tasks, presentations and questionnaires that have been proposed we are offering them the opportunity to join with culturally different speakers in authentic, face-to-face interaction to foster their intercultural awareness.

What is more, telecollaboration has been found to contribute to the learning of a new culture by providing students with a knowledge different from the one they usually find in the traditional textbooks or other cultural resources (O'Dowd 2006). Despite their convenience, textbooks can be highly criticized for being too rigid or for imposing particular teaching styles and allowing little space for creativity, for this reason, Skype gives us the chance to innovate and reach our cultural goals.

To sum up, we should forget the idea that dialogic learning will always lead to conflict between cultures. As Graff (1992:8) remarks, "culture itself is a debate and not a monologue", for this reason cultural conflicts are not going to disappear in the short term. The solution does not consist on socio-cultural strategies that allow students to avoid conflict but on help them to deal with conflict as a learning opportunity.

## **7. Conclusion**

The aim of this research was to explore a way of integrating Intercultural competence into the Spanish curriculum and verify if collaborative tasks via Skype truly increased students' ICC and cultural vocabulary. The use of ICT will help students to break the routine and foster authentic language, face-to-face interaction through their lingua franca, increasing students' motivation and therefore, improving cultural skills and vocabulary.

It must be considered that this study has its limitations. On the one hand, it is true that we live in a hyper-connected era, and ICT is progressing very quickly, nevertheless, when we deal with these new tools, both students and teachers should bear in mind that problems such as connection failures, misunderstandings or time difference may arise. Some students may not be familiarized with the use of these tools and group work; therefore, it is a

limitation that should be taken into consideration. Besides, the lack of time can also suppose a hurdle. If we want to cover all the contents of the curriculum, we have to organize all the activities properly.

In terms of future lines of research, it could be positive to implement this methodology at secondary and even university levels since the lack of ICC is a wide spread fact in our education system. Both students and teachers should be aware that ICC is a crucial part of the language learning process, as important as communicative language competence. There is a need for improvement in the classroom schedules to introduce culture and new technologies as part of the lessons and not as something students should do at home or in their free time. Thus, as explained throughout this project, telecollaboration activities via Skype can give students and teachers the opportunity to carry out innovative activities and connect themselves with the world and cultures that surrounds them without the need of leaving their countries or classrooms.

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